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CONTENTS

COMMENTS . . . . Page 349
BRITISH POLICY IN GERMANY 351
ARAB MYTH AND REALITY. By R. H. S. Crossman, M.P. 352
A LONDON DIARY. By Critic 353
THE SPANISH DILEMMA 354
THE TEAM SPIRIT? By Geoffrey Cooper, M.P. . 355
MOSCOW IN MAY 355
ODE ON A PLASTIC URN. By Sagittarius . . 356
THIS ENGLAND 356
MONTEVERDI'S VESPERS. By Desmond Shawe-Taylor 356
NEW PLAYS. By Stephen Potter . . . 356
RADIO NOTES. By Edward Sackville West . 357
THE MOVIES. By William Whitebait . . 357
CORRESPONDENCE 358
From H. St. J. B. Philby; Freda White; Brigadier Maclean, M.P.; K. Zilliacus, M.P.; Rebecca West; Victor Gollancz; J. L. Hasper
BOOKS IN GENERAL. By Walter Allen . . 361
REVIEWS: Page
The Older Civilisation. By G. W. Stonier . 361
Pindar: A New Judgment. By Louis MacNeice 362
The Oglanders of Nunwell. By Ralph Partridge 363
Behind the Scenes. By Anthony West . . 363
Eastern Album. By Lionel Cranfield . . 364
From Moses to Lenin. By Norman MacKenzie 364
WEEK-END COMPETITIONS 365

NO ARMISTICE BETWEEN ALLIES?

THE measure of the Paris Conference's failure is not the inability, so far, of the Foreign Ministers to find agreed formulae for the Italian and Balkan Treaties: the machinery of consultation has not broken down or been abandoned, nor is it necessary to despair of present differences being narrowed between now and the reassembly of the Conference next month. The real tragedy is that the foreign Ministers of Britain, America and Russia talked about a revised Armistice for Italy without showing any recognition of the necessity of an Armistice amongst themselves.

Last week-end, when deadlock seemed to have been reached on practically every issue, the discussions were thought to have taken a new lease of life: Mr. Molotov, who had asked originally for Soviet trusteeship over Tripolitania and, later, for international trusteeship with a Russian administrator, abandoned this gambit in favour of the French proposal that Italy should be entrusted by Uno with a mandate over all her former colonies. But this death-bed rally was short-lived; Mr. Bevin, citing British pledges to the Senussi, insisted, so far as Cyrenaica is concerned, that the trusteeship must be British. Settlement of the colonial question thus aborted, and the direct conflict of opinion between the U.S.S.R. and the Western Democracies over the status of Trieste still unresolved, the Conference relapsed into inconclusive verbal fencing. Mr. Molotov offered to withdraw Russian troops from Bulgaria, if British and American forces were withdrawn from Italy. Not a fair bargain, retorted Mr. Bevin: if the British garrison of Austria were thus to sacrifice its lines of communication through Italy, the Red Army must abandon its claim to have troops protecting its lines of communication on the north, as well as on the south, bank of the Danube. The whole discussion was based on the strategies of two armed camps.

Could agreement have been reached? It is an open question. The Russian Delegation, it is safe to infer, entered the Conference with a pre-conceived set of minimum demands. Almost certainly these included the cession of Trieste to Yugoslavia. Suppose that demand had been granted, would the Russians still have pressed aggressively for other "maritime rights" in the Mediterranean, or have declined to entertain the idea of an international authority for the Danube Valley? Was the solution of sharing bases even discussed? As far as the public knows, neither Mr. Byrnes nor Mr. Bevin showed any inclination even to explore such possibilities. Instead, they adopted the attitude that, whereas the Russians were negotiating in a cynical spirit of "deals," between big Powers, the British and American delegations stood by principles—justice for the Senussi, abstract ethnic rights in Venezia Giulia. Such arguments look to the world like sheer cant in the mouth of statesmen who had just agreed totally to disregard these principles in the case of the South Tyrol.

But this is not the real root of the matter, at least so far as the British Foreign Secretary is concerned. Mr. Byrnes, on his part, may not have been in a position to make the Russians a counter offer which they would have deemed worthy of consideration in return for the inclusion of Trieste in the Soviet-influenced sector of Europe. The U.S. Delegation could think of Eastern Europe merely as a market for exploitation by American capitalist enterprise. Between this standpoint and that of the U.S.S.R., there was little hope of accommodation. But Mr. Bevin was not in that position. In speeches before Labour audiences, he always professes his determination to approach the problems of peace, in Europe and in the Middle East alike, from the standpoint of economic security and higher living standards for the common man; he had no mandate from his countrymen, as Mr. Byrnes had, to seek markets for British private enterprise.

But at the Conference Mr. Bevin showed no signs of having this conception of peace and reconstruction firmly in his mind. He seemed to have his eyes set only on strategic maps and bases and military lines of communication. Thus he missed a great opportunity. Had he proposed, as a Socialist Minister, a Socialist plan for a non-profit-making international Danube Valley Authority, in which the Russians would have been asked to accept, not the infiltration of Western capitalism into their "security zone," but participation by Britain and (if America so chose) by the United States in an integral scheme of planned reconstruction, involving Poland and Czechoslovakia no less than the Danubian States, he would really have secured the "cards-on-the-table-situation" which he has always proclaimed to be desirable. It may be that, when it came to the test, the Russians would have proved too suspicious of British intentions to be willing to collaborate. But that is not certain. What is certain is that he would have put the British Government in a stronger moral position and would at least have been aiming at the only sort of solution in which the jigsaw of disputed frontiers, ports, and ethnic rights can be fitted into place.

Similar considerations apply to the question of Germany, whose future the Ministers discussed "informally" before they dispersed. Somehow a bridge must be found between the Franco-Russian demand for security—involving, in M. Bidault's eyes the incorporation of the Saar in France and the political severance of the Ruhr from the Reich—and the Anglo-American thesis that Germany must economically be a going concern and that this requires both the revision of the Potsdam Agreement (already virtually a dead letter) and the abandonment of Zonal frontiers. The only hope of reconciling these standpoints is on the basis of a Reich whose unity France and Russia will not regard as a menace; and that means a Germany genuinely Socialist.

Palestine Prospects

It is to be hoped the prolonged postponement of the British announcement of policy with regard to Palestine indicates that Mr. Bevin is after all inducing Mr. Byrnes to share the responsibility for carrying the Anglo-American Report into effect. What can be reasonably expected of the American Government—apart from the rumoured offer of a large and not wholly welcome Palestinian loan—is unstinted technical assistance in the transport and housing of the hundred thousand

and consistent support for the Report's long-term policy if the matter comes up in Uno. For whereas the Arabs will be represented by no less than six delegates, the Jews will have no representation at all. Since Soviet Russia does not favour Zionism, the task of writing the Zionist interest into the new trusteeship agreement which will replace the mandate will fall on Britain and America. If they agree on a common policy, they may succeed: if they quarrel, the outlook for the National Home under Uno is very bleak. This is no doubt one reason why friends in this country of the National Home are now canvassing the idea of partition. They realise that the final draft of the Uno trusteeship Agreement, might well, under Arab and Soviet pressure, and with the tacit connivance of the British Government, reproduce in more elegant phrases the policy of the 1939 White Paper. Partition, on the other hand, which has new possibilities since Transjordan became independent, if immediately undertaken, would ensure to the Jews a part of their Promised Land. Unfortunately the Arabs also see the force of this argument. They will forcibly oppose partition so long as they see any possibility, either through the British Government or through Uno, of stopping Jewish immigration altogether after the entry of the hundred thousand. The Arabs still have powerful friends in this country and, indeed, in the Cabinet, who regard the Anglo-American Report as a "sell-out to the Americans" and are determined, when the shouting is over, by one way or another, to revert to the 1939 policy. Partition will only become practicable if and when the Arabs realise that Britain will never grant their extreme demands.

Exit Emmanuel

Without a word to the Italian Government, but with the knowledge of the Allied Commission, Victor Emmanuel slipped away at night, like James II, from his throne and his country. This, as a manoeuvre designed to eliminate the late King's compromised record from the disputed constitutional issue, and a suitable climax to an ignoble and disastrous reign. Umberto, still regarded by many as mere Lieutenant-General, is a more presentable if equally unnecessary character. The monarchists, who have seen their hopes of winning the referendum on June 2nd decline rapidly since the Christian Democrats decided emphatically for a republic, have carried through this last-minute switch of figureheads as a last attempt to save the House of Savoy. The Republican parties, from the Communists to the Christian Democrats, are outraged at what they consider a clear violation of the pledges Umberto gave only a few weeks ago. Speakers at anti-monarchist demonstrations have gone so far as to declare that, in view of Emmanuel's subterfuge, a monarchist victory in the referendum would be regarded as void. It would certainly produce a division in Italian politics nearly as bitter and difficult to bridge as the struggle against the House of Glucksburg in Greece. This is the last thing that Italy, in her present state, can afford. Reconstruction is already hanging fire until the election and the referendum are over and the Peace Treaty agreed. A major constitutional clash might well wreck any immediate prospect of recovery for this ruined and demoralised people.

The Greek Plebiscite

To the consternation of the Centre and Left parties, the plebiscite on the Greek monarchy has now been fixed for September 1st. Whitehall, according to Mr. McNeil, has indicated that Britain cannot over-rule the wishes of the elected Royalist Government if it does not see fit to accept the previous British plan to postpone the issue for two years. The Royalists are in a hurry. They obviously hope to take advantage of the conditions that enabled them to win the recent elections, not least of which were the confusion of the democratic groups and the disputed electoral rolls. The Royalists, it is true, are prepared to revise the registers under British and American supervision, but the experience of the elections casts some doubt on the adequacy of this process. In any case, intimidation and persecution of the Centre and Left continue and, according to some reports, have even increased in recent weeks. In the larger towns conditions have improved slightly—although the prisons still contain many people held without charge or for acts committed against the occupying forces—but in the countryside "X"-ite attacks on democratic organisations and individuals are connived at by the administration. Mr. Sophoulis states that he reluctantly agreed to a Spring election on the understanding that no plebiscite would be held until 1948. Certainly there is a serious danger that the attempt to secure an early return of King George may be such provocation as will effectively abort any hope of restoring some kind of political and economic normality to Greece. The remarks of Archbishop Damaskinos in opening the Greek Parliament, when he spoke of national security requiring the return of frontier provinces, are indicative of the bellicose mood of the Royalists.

Next Step in India

The fact that the negotiations in Simla on India's permanent constitution ended inconclusively should not be regarded as meaning that there was a wide, unbridged gap between the standpoints of Congress and the Moslem League. Indeed, there seems reason to believe that, in the course of the past two months' discussions, their differences have been considerably narrowed, but that a point was finally reached at which both Congress and League, rather than make further concessions, preferred to leave it to the Cabinet Mission to put forward and, if necessary impose, its own solution both for the establishment of an immediate Provisional Government and for the composition of the Constituent Assembly. We go to press before the Mission's proposals are known; but they will presumably follow broadly the lines of the "three-layer" federal structure on which the Simla talks centred. As such, it is clear that they will represent a compromise between the Congress conception of an effective All-India Government and the Moslem League's notion of an independent Pakistan. That is to say, in the hope of securing Mr. Jinnah's concurrence, the Mission will probably propound a scheme in which the Centre will be a good deal weaker than is really desirable if it is to cope efficiently with India's social and economic problems—to say nothing of the immediate famine crisis. Mr. Jinnah is credited with willingness to concede to the Centre Government sovereignty in respect to communications, defence and foreign affairs. But if the Centre is to have no taxing powers and must depend for its revenues on the good will of two financially autonomous subfederations, it may prove to be a sadly impotent authority.

The American Loan

The Loan got through the United States Senate, in the end with a fairly comfortable majority; and it has now gone to the House of Representatives, when the entire battle—public hearings and all, followed by the struggle over priorities— will have to be fought out over again. The division on the question of naval bases in the Senate was rather unpleasantly close; and there has since been further talk of a United States demand for the cession of certain bases in the Pacific. More will be heard of this in the course of the House hearings; but most people on both sides of the Atlantic now seem to take it almost for granted that the Loan will go through. This, of course, will ease the immediate position about petrol, tobacco, and other non-food purchases in the United States, just as the parallel Canadian loan will ease the position in other respects. The food position cannot be eased for the time being, because it depends on shortage, not of money only, but even more of supplies. There is another easement for the immediate future in the decision to postpone the International Trade Conference at which the British Government would have been called on to redeem its pledge to support on all essential points the American demand for "no discrimination"—including the abolition of Empire preference in all its forms and of any plan for mutual trade within the sterling area. The Trade Conference recedes, in view of the evident reluctance of other countries to accept the American demands. But the financial obligations of the Loan Agreement are now hard upon us; and they include the abolition of all exchange control over current transactions within a year, as well as an attempt to settle the problem of the sterling balances. It is natural to feel some relief at the prospect of the Loan going through—even if, on long-run considerations, the relief is more than offset by apprehension. But let us make no mistake; the obligations are heavy, and, even with the Loan, no more than a modest relaxation of austerity about imports can be justified.

Mr. Morrison's Mission

One result of Mr. Herbert Morrison's talks in Washington on the food crisis has already been announced: the U.S. Administration is taking steps to secure that half of the 1946 wheat crop delivered by farmers to the elevators is sold immediately, and 50 per cent. of those supplies will be requisitioned by the Government. This is a welcome indication that the American authorities now recognise that this summer will not see the end of the crisis. On the other hand, there are no signs that the U.S. Government is prepared, in election year, to reconsider its decision not to re-introduce food rationing; and it still remains to be seen whether voluntary means will extract from the United States enough wheat to avert widespread starvation, both in Europe and India, between the end of this month and the end of August, when new crop supplies will begin to be available. Mr. Hoover, in his report to President Truman, estimates the total requirements of the deficit countries between May 1st and September 30th at 14.5 million tons, and he puts the figure of "probable" supplies over the same period at 10.9 million tons. Thus, at best, there will be a wide, unbridged gap; but even the estimated figure of supplies in sight depends upon the ability of the United States to make good a total of 4.2 million tons of wheat exports during the period. On present indications those exports may not be forthcoming.

Doctors' Earnings

If Mr. Bevan accepts the finding of the Spens Committee as a basis for determining the remuneration of doctors employed in the National Health Service, the medical profession should have no cause to complain that it is receiving ungenerous treatment at the hands of the community. The Committee considers that, between 40 and 50 years of age, three medical practitioners out of every four should receive (in terms of 1939 money) net incomes of over £1,000; one in every two, net incomes of over £1,300; and approximately one in four, incomes of £1,600 or more. Having regard to the fact that the Income Tax authorities normally allow doctors to offset substantial expenses before arriving at net income, the suggested scale of earnings looks by no means illiberal. The error, if there be one, is certainly on the right side; no greater disservice could be done to the Health Scheme than to stint the pay of the profession on whose goodwill it largely depends. The Committee, however, has presented the Minister with one awkward dilemma. It stresses the view that, owing to the great "diversity of ability and effort among general practitioners," the range of earnings ought to be wide; indeed, it holds that practitioners of exceptional skill should be able to attain net incomes of over £2,500. If this view be accepted, it follows logically that in the National Health Service the basic salary will have to be a relatively unimportant factor in total remuneration, which will have to be determined mainly by capitation fees. In that case there will be financial competition between doctors for capitation fees, and it is difficult to see how the co-operative Health Centres which, with their pooling of skill, represent perhaps the most helpful feature in the Scheme, are going to materialise or work smoothly.

The New Towns Bill

The debate on the Second Reading of the New Towns Bill provided no surprises—for egregiously silly Conservative speeches are not in the category of surprising events. Why Lord Hinchinbrooke regarded the proposal to build any new towns at all as "frankly totalitarian" did not very plainly appear; nor did Mr. W. S. Morrison seem to be at all clear in his own mind why he was put up to throw cold water on the Bill—his early semblance of an argument being that it might divert labour and energy from the rebuilding of existing towns. This, surely, is exactly what it is meant to do, by rehousing a substantial number of people in the new towns instead of the old. Several speakers tried to make capital of the press stories about opposition in Stevenage from persons threatened with eviction from their homes, though Mr. Silkin had made plain his intention that those who, for sound planning reasons, had to be moved were to be generously treated in the matter of alternative accommodation. There was remarkably little criticism of the Government's rejection of the Reith Committee's proposal to set up local-authority-sponsored as well as Government-sponsored corporations to develop the new towns; indeed, Mr. Silkin disposed of that point pretty effectively before the debate began. In general, the Bill had an easy passage, with some Conservative support from the less hidebound back-benchers. In the background loomed the fear of any extension of public economic enterprise which dominates official Conservative policy. But this deeply entrenched opposition did not come out clearly into the open; and when the debate was over, Mr. Silkin had cause to look forward to an easy romp through the subsequent stages.

Truce in U.S.A. Mines

Mr. John Lewis, by calling a fortnight's truce in the American coal strike, has just averted a crisis in American industry that might have had awkward repercussions. The clamour for anti-strike legislation has been growing, and there has been increasing pressure on President Truman to intervene by taking over the mines and ordering the miners back to work. The President has held his hand, because he doubted whether the miners would obey his order, and did not quite know what to do next if they refused. The political parties are probably unwilling to set out on a course of anti-trade-union legislation in an election year; and accordingly, Mr. Lewis can go a long way, provided that he knows just when to halt—as he apparently does. From his point of view, of course, the strike is a bid for leadership of the A.F. of L. and for making it, instead of the C.I.O., look like the spearhead of militant Labour. His claims for the miners are, moreover, of a sort to rouse strong sympathies as well as violent opposition. He is claiming that, before wages and hours are discussed, the mine-operators shall agree to a welfare levy on every ton of coal mined—on the lines of our welfare levy, but higher—to be used for the improvement of the appalling social conditions in many of the soft-coal mining areas. The operators, who have been used to ruling the mining villages as feudal tyrants—owning everything and enforcing their "justice" with their own police—are naturally in violent opposition; but Mr. Lewis's case is strong, precisely because the prevailing conditions are an outrage.

PARLIAMENT: Strategy and Tactics

Wednesday

The principal parliamentary news at the beginning of this week was the announcement of a minor (and junior) Ministerial reshuffle. Speculation had been current for some days on who would be involved and Phineas noted, perhaps a trifle uncharitably, a number of eager young countenances in the lobbies on which ostentatious alertness and intelligence were blended with a modest appreciation of their unworthiness of the honours which they had not yet received.

On Friday night the announcement was made that Parker (Dagenham) and Jennie Adamson (Dartford) were being replaced by Bottomley (Chatham) and Blenkinsop (Newcastle-on-Tyne E.) at Dominions and Pensions respectively; while Hugh Gaitskell (Leeds S.) was brought in for Foster (Wigan) who had resigned from Fuel and Power a couple of days earlier. These are good appointments at least in breaking fresh ground; and all three new Ministers will set out to win their spurs with the good will of their colleagues. It is to be hoped that Gaitskell, one of the half-dozen ablest back-benchers in the House, is not being driven too hard in a job which is particularly thankless at the moment, and in which he deserves sympathy as well as congratulations.

He went into action immediately on the Report Stage of the Coal Bill, which dragged its weary way through Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday and led Phineas to reflect on the peculiar poignancy of the poet's lines about "the long littleness of life." The report stage of a complicated Bill can be a tedious and repetitive occasion—except apparently to the lawyers, who have a field-day. As Harold MacMillan remarked, "they have shown that the animosity which they have against each other as professionals far outweighs any party division"; and the House has grown pretty tired of the windy sallies of Messrs. Turner-Samuels (Gloucester), Boyd-Carpenter (Kingston), Strauss (English Universities) and several others. These occasions are sometimes interesting, however, in revealing unsuspected characteristics in some of the best established parliamentary figures. This week, for instance, has shown that Shinwell, whose ability, resolution and clarity of expression are unquestionable, none the less lacks generalship. Again and again he was led into digressions prolonging the proceedings and delaying the Third Reading, which was presumably his objective. A really good parliamentarian would have sternly ignored the siren calls of MacMillan and Crookshank and would have got the Bill that much quicker.

Crookshank, incidentally, is becoming increasingly the mainstay of the Opposition Front Bench. It may be said of him that, long undistinguished in minor office, he has taken to his new-found irresponsibilities like a duck to water. Suave, fluent, pertinacious, sly and exceedingly astute, he bobs up again and again, apparently equally at home on any subject. His technique is well worth studying by those who, like Phineas, aspire one day to have half his skill. He always begins quietly, feeling his way and probing for any sign of weakness. When he finds it, he exploits brilliantly; but he is careful to leave himself covered and quick to withdraw if he encounters opposition. These cavalry tactics serve his party brilliantly and, though he remains unknown to the country, he is a notable parliamentarian.

The important debate on the German and Austrian Control Commission was marred by bad stage management. John Hynd's opening statement, which lasted 70 minutes, was, even so, discursive and inadequate to the vastness of the subject, totally failing to canalise the subsequent discussion into the main political channels. The result was a very ragged debate ranging from the ubiquitous Crookshank, who managed to suggest an atmosphere of maladministration without ever attacking a policy with which he obviously agreed, to a very powerful speech, certainly the best of the day, from Jennie Lee (Cannock). But the real issues were scarcely touched and certainly not by the Government. If John Hynd had reserved his strength to answer the debate, the day might have been spent much more profitably.

Phineas Tertius

BRITISH POLICY IN GERMANY

Decency is no substitute for policy. That is the chief moral of the first full House of Commons debate on British rule in Germany. Mr. Hynd, who is responsible for our Military Government, is certainly aware that big decisions must be made. He ridiculed the absurd pretence that the Germans are politically apathetic. He has himself addressed crowded meetings of hungry German workers. He reminded the House that, when the Germans get the chance to vote on such an issue as Social Democratic-Communist fusion, the poll is exceptionally high. In the Russian Zone, where the Communist Party is in the ascendant, the political and economic drives are inseparable. The great estates have been broken up, the industries nationalised and, though some industrial plants continue to be taken away, there is much rebuilding and even more propaganda for the Socialist Reich of the future. In their zone, the Americans encourage local German activity. The task of purging Nazis and punishing war criminals has been entrusted to tribunals of selected Germans, who hope to complete their task, under American supervision, within the next eight months. Local elections have been held and a federal scheme has been worked out for the future government of Southern Germany. The Americans are anxious to leave, and are devolving responsibility as fast as possible. They began by sacking Nazis wholesale; they have since reinstated some of them. The political results of American occupation are not yet clear.

British methods have been different. We have relied on our popularity, and we have relied on it too long. We congratulate ourselves that we are allowing local government to develop slowly and we give free play to political parties. We have undoubtedly been the least unpopular of the occupying Powers. We know that the Russians, in the early days of occupation, confirmed the deep-seated fears of Germans by ruthless and undisciplined conduct. We were content to get on with the job, far more difficult in our area than any other, of restoring the essential services to a shattered country, and showing ourselves to be correct and tolerant rulers. But there is no competent observer of Germany to-day who would not agree that our prestige has dropped in the last six months, because there comes a time when the negative virtues become vices. It is not our fault that we now rule over a hungry people, and we naturally feel that it is absurd that we should get no credit for spending, by way of reparations to Germany, eighty million pounds a year, mainly out of our small stock of dollars, in feeding Germans. But we shall not get any credit while the hunger lasts, and until we have carried out that active Socialist policy which is expected of a Labour Government.

In Hanover last week-end, the Social-Democratic Party, which is favoured by the British, held its first conference. By some strange mishap, no official representative of the British Labour or Trade Union movement was present. The principal speech was made by Dr. Schumacher, the leader of those Social-Democrats who are opposed to fusion with the Communists. He emphasised that he was not hostile to Russia, nor averse from co-operation with the Communists, but that Social-Democrats could only stand for a united Germany which guarded individual freedom and which carried through a Socialist policy. It was significant that he also attacked the attitude of the occupying Powers, declaring that, if it was proposed to detach the Ruhr from the rest of Germany, Social-Democracy might as well wind up and leave it to the Allies to govern their German colony as best they could. Dr. Schumacher's criticisms clearly sprang from the knowledge that Social-Democracy cannot hold its own against the growing forces of Communism and the reviving activities of the Nazis, unless the British could give the workers of Western Germany food and hope.

If German Socialists could speak their minds freely, they would add other criticisms of Military Government. Some of these were expressed in the inadequate debate in the House of Commons last week. Several M.P.s raised the question of corruption in Military Government. It is notorious, and it is no answer to say that the Russians loot and that, in the American zone, racketeering has flourished on a far greater scale. The temptations for dishonesty in Germany are enormous, and the conditions of service are such as to attract men who, not conspicuously successful in the Army or in civil life, regard seven years in Germany as an opportunity of making money in easy conditions. There are, of course, at the top level and throughout the service a large number of disinterested, responsible and scrupulous public servants, both military and civilian. There are a few who so believe in the task that they risk their whole careers to perform it. But these are exceptions, and the calibre of men recently appointed has not been generally high. Mr. Hynd is aware of this problem, and it may be hoped that it will receive the active attention of the new Regional Commissioners whose appointments he has announced.

Something more than clean administration is required if Germans are to work for a democratic future. The Germans in our Zone are woefully ignorant of what we are trying to do, of our difficulties and of the world in which they have been promised a chance again to play their part. The supply of newspapers under British supervision is pathetically inadequate, and contrasts strangely with the flood of Russian propaganda or with the up-to-date newspaper service which the Americans, who are not troubled by dollar difficulties, naturally find it so much easier to supply. Again, the British seem haunted by fear of any large-scale German activity. It was with great reluctance that the Trade Unions were even allowed, and the opportunities offered them are still meagre. Yet the one force with a thoroughly democratic and anti-Nazi record in Germany is the Trade Union movement. If it is properly encouraged, it supplies the answer to the British difficulty about denazification. Here the case of Hanover, with its Nazi police chief, and many other highly placed Nazi officers, has become notorious. But the evil goes much further. On the grounds that it destroys efficiency to dismiss managers and technicians, many Nazis are allowed to hold important positions in the Ruhr, and in some places factory workers and miners are now told that it is an offence to denounce Nazi officials. It may happen that men return from concentration camps to find that those who informed against them in the Hitler period are still in office above them. There is no way out of this dilemma except, even at the loss of some efficiency, to nationalise the industries (which workers fear are to be given back to old employers) and to give the Trade Unions a far greater measure of responsibility for running the factories and mines. Again, it is strange but true that the Co-operative movement, which should be the very basis of democratic reconstruction, has only with great difficulty gained any recognition; that in Hamburg, for instance, its headquarters are used by the British for their own purposes, and that Co-operatives are only allowed on a trivial local basis.

These are only examples of the type of change which the British must inaugurate if they wish to encourage the growth of a Germany which is not nationalist or militarist. To oppose Communism is not a policy, and the surest way to discredit Social-Democrats is to saddle them with our support while refusing to carry out their policy. The effect is to make young Germans feel that Social-Democrats are British Quislings and that the hope and duty of a patriot lies in supporting either the Communists or one of the crypto-Nazi groups which are forming outside the licensed parties or within those of the Right.

ARAB MYTH AND REALITY

"Can we afford to throw the Arab League into the arms of the Soviet Union?"

This is one of those questions which cannot be answered with a plain "yes" or "no." The Arab League is not a well-knit union of Arab States with a common foreign policy or even with common aims. Indeed, there is only one issue on which there is any agreement in the League—anti-Zionism. Even here, however, behind the façade of public unity there are sharp differences of attitude. The Egyptians, for instance, will give moral support to the Palestinian Arabs, but, as Azzam Pasha made clear last week, they are not for a moment prepared to jeopardise their own negotiations with Great Britain. The Iraqis, on the other hand, whose economic interests are genuinely affected by Palestinian developments, would probably be prepared to join actively in a campaign of violence if it were not for the Kurdish threat. Similarly, there is little in common between the primitive and ferocious—but also somewhat remote—anti-Zionism of Ibn Saud and the manoeuvring of the Amir Abdulla of Transjordan who has everything to gain by coming to an understanding with the Jews of Palestine. When the propaganda barrage is over and the moment for action arrives, there is not much likelihood of any real agreement among the members of the League.

The simple picture, therefore, of the Arab League as a compact organisation with an Arab policy is a dangerous delusion. In reality the League is a collection of Middle Eastern States, with a common culture and with certain common and certain conflicting interests. In social structure and economic development these Arab States vary from the royal tribalism of Saudi Arabia to the complex class conflict of Egypt. What binds the Arabs of all these States together is a passionate and growing determination to cease to be mere objects of foreign imperialism and to become masters of their own fate. What divides the States one from another, and even more deeply the factions and classes within each State, are the methods to be used in accomplishing this purpose. The older generation of politicians, many of them trained in clan leadership. blood feuds and guerrilla warfare, still treat politics as a matter of personal deals and personal alliances, and genuinely regret the break-up of the Ottoman Empire. The younger generation, drawn chiefly from the graduates of Cairo and Beirut and deeply influenced by Western social science, are far more ardently nationalist than their elders. But they recognise that social reconstruction is an essential part of any genuine national liberation and they are seeking to create political parties based not on family loyalty but on Western democratic organisations. So far, power has remained almost entirely in the hands of the elder and more cynical politicians.

One of our main troubles in the Middle East is the natural British inclination to fall in love with all that is decadent in Arab civilisation and to disregard or dislike the new, less charming and less subservient features. In Jerusalem, for instance, as a candid official remarked to me, there is on the one side Anglo-Arab Society and on the other the Jews. British officials find it far easier to mix socially with the small, highly civilised coterie which runs Arab politics than with the tough hard-headed business men and Socialists of the Jewish Agency. "After all," as one extremely intelligent police officer said to me, "the old Arab has decent manners and we know we are his master. But the damned Jew is twice as able as most of us and he reminds us of it every day." This sort of "pro-Arabism" is not really a love of the Arabs at all. It is a concealed anti-Semitism, even more insulting to the Arabs than to the Jews. Arab politicians, no doubt, find it convenient to exploit our supercilious "friendship" in order to defeat the Jews; but it is not a basis on which any real collaboration can be built between Britain and the Arabs, either in Palestine or in any other Middle Eastern State.

Mr. Bevin has frequently expressed his conviction that the task of Labour's Foreign Secretary is to raise the standard of living of the millions of illiterate *fellahin* who make up the overwhelming majority of the Arab peoples. But before Mr. Bevin took office, the map, on which the diplomat was instructed to fix his eye, showed not the economic and industrial potentialities of the country in which he was serving, but the disposition of British troops, airfields, and pipelines. The Arab States were regarded as a vital "protective" zone in the event of war with any Great Power which threatened Suez. Independence was granted to one Arab State after another, not because it was seriously argued that these States were ripe for independence, or that it would benefit the *fellahin*, but as a bid to win the loyalty of Arab politicians and princes.

Unfortunately, owing to the attitude of our representatives on the spot and the timing of these concessions, we made only too clear the opportunist character of our diplomacy. Even the 1939 White Paper on Palestine failed completely to win Arab confidence or loyalty, because no Arab could fail to see that it was a piece of pure expediency, a concession granted not because we thought it just—which it obviously was not—but because we desired to reduce the number of divisions required in this area in the event of war with Germany.

By completely disregarding the genuine interests of the Arab States, by not even attempting to find and develop common economic interests between them and Great Britain, we have taught the Arab politicians to distrust our word and to assume that we shall always treat them as pawns in the opening gambit of the next world war. But the puppets fashioned by "realistic" British diplomacy have begun, like Frankenstein's monster, to terrorise their creator, by threatening, unless they get what they want, to change over, first to the German and then to the Russian side. Having given the Arabs independence and created the Arab League, solely in order to provide strategic defences for the Empire, we find that the League is constantly endangering the Empire and constantly in need of appeasement.

The remedy is easy to state but difficult to achieve, though an excellent start has been made in Egypt. The Labour Government must convince the Arab world that its policy is based on something better than military opportunism, and that Arab friendship is, in its eyes, not merely an expedient, forced on us by our fears of Russian expansion, but something from which both we and the Arab can win concrete economic and social benefits. The Arabs have a genuine liking for this country. But they also have a deep sense of truth and justice, and a bitter contempt, disguised often by their excellent manners, for a Great Power which sacrifices principles for expediency. If a Great Power shows this lamentable tendency, they will, with the greatest relish, extract the last ounce of appeasement from it. Then, if it pays them, they will throw the Great Power over, because, as they reasonably argue, pure opportunism must be a two-sided relationship. If Britain indulges in it, so must they. If, for instance, against our better judgment and our sense of justice, we were to decide, purely out of fear of Russian influence, to assist them in liquidating the National Home, we should not, by this demonstration of weakness, either win their respect or ensure that our troops can be moved from Egypt into a loyal Arab Palestine. The Mufti did not lead his guerrillas against the British Army for three years in order to ensure their permanent presence in what he regards as an exclusively Arab country. The next stage in the game of beggar-my-neighbour would be the return of the Mufti to Jerusalem and the demand for a British withdrawal from Palestine itself.

In brief, the only sound British strategy in the

Middle East is a sound political policy. Our policy-makers and diplomats, by a self-denying ordinance, should forbid themselves to study military maps or to count up divisions, and should turn their attention to irrigation, trade and social welfare. They should not forget the weakness of the position of the ruling class in many Arab States, and they should give positive encouragement to the progressive forces among the middle-classes, the students and the skilled workers, whose contempt for British opportunism is only equalled by their hatred for the machinations of their own politicians. The way to prevent the Arab world from swinging over to Russia is not to pay danegeld in Palestine, but to convince the Arabs, throughout the Middle East, that they have something to gain in terms of social welfare and economic freedom from friendship and collaboration with Great Britain.

Such a policy will find little support among most of the puppet governments created by Mr. Bevin's predecessors. These politicians are often as little interested in the *fellahin* as the British officials with whom they associate. But though the change in attitude will take years to achieve and provoke many acute difficulties, it must be made firmly and consistently; and if there are officials on the spot unable to understand this new policy, they must be replaced by men who can. Otherwise the decision to evacuate our troops from Egypt, which could be the beginning of a new era of genuine Anglo-Arab friendship, will be regarded by the Arabs—and therefore be in fact—only another step in the fatal process of appeasement.

R. H. S. Crossman

A LONDON DIARY

If we only order the same number of the new smaller, darker and more nutritious loaves as we used to buy of the old, if we don't grumble about the beer shortage, and about having fewer cakes and biscuits, we shall be doing something small, but useful, about the world famine. I believe that we ought also to have bread rationing in spite of the administrative difficulties, and I can make no sense of the Minister's statement that to reduce stocks would endanger our health. But the main trouble is that the Americans are renigging on their promises, Their food is still uncontrolled and unlimited; their farmers are feeding grain to pigs and cattle. Many Americans, of course, are anxious to do the right thing, and it is significant that the latest issue of *Time* gives prominence to letters from two Americans who point out that as long as surplus food is on sale in the shops they, or their neighbours, will buy it. They say the only way in which grain can be saved for export is for the administration to get hold of it before it becomes bread or cake. Few people will voluntarily buy less food if they know that their abstention merely leaves it on the counter for someone else to purchase before the shops close at night. Appeals for economy are meaningless unless the supply is cut down. On another page of *Time* I read that the wife of a U.S. colonel has been given a ten-roomed house in Berlin on joining her husband there. She says that the plumbing is excellent. I hope there is enough fuel this winter to provide running hot water for all three tiled bathrooms!

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Rumour, as usual, is running riot in France. A friend, recently back, reports that Paris is full of the story that the Soviet grain ship landed 1,500 tons of arms at Marseilles. In Marseilles, on the other hand, the dockers deny the story and declare that the *réactionnaires* are preparing *a coup d'état* in Paris. The arms story is not believed by intelligent people because the whole cargo was discharged in daylight. It probably arose because arms are being collected in the South of France for the Spanish Maquis. Whether there is any more truth in the supposed Right *coup* I don't know. De Gaulle would only seek power if the political parties are discredited, while the various semi-Fascist bodies, *Camelots du Roi, Giraudistes* and *Parti Républicain de la Liberté* are not at present thought to have sufficient following to attempt the use of force. Some may have such an idea in mind, however, for though the Communists received a rebuff in the Referendum, the C.P. remains the most efficient party in France, and will probably have the strongest representation in the Constituent Assembly that is to be elected on June 2nd. According to forecasts, the Radicals, supported by industries that fear nationalisation, will gain at the expense of the Socialists and the P.R.L. at the expense of the M.R.P.

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A fortnight ago I referred to the disappointment of Indonesian Ministers on their recent visit to Holland, and said that the Dutch Government were still trying to sidestep and that the British would have to be careful not to be trapped into fighting for Dutch imperialism. I have made enquiries, and in spite of official denials I still believe I was right. A settlement may, of course, come through any day if the Dutch are convinced that the British will withdraw unless they accept a reasonable settlement. But if one reads the speeches of Dr. Logemann, the Dutch Overseas Secretary, accepting the idea of an Indonesian Republic, one finds that he is still trying to exclude Sumatra, which goes back on what the Indonesians believe to have been conceded in earlier conversations; that he still demands that Dutch troops may act in any part of Indonesia; and that the rights and functions of the Crown representatives in the proposed Republic of Java are still undefined.

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I am also challenged on two points of fact. I spoke of a Dutch censorship in Indonesia. I learn that the censorship has been officially abolished, but I also learn that Indonesians in Holland complain that letters from their native country are still opened. The Sjahrir Cabinet seem to lack facilities for making their case to the world, and there is still no direct communication between Indonesians in Holland and their own Government in Java. Further, I am told that the Indonesian Ministers agreed amongst themselves not to broadcast or address public meetings while they were in Holland. It would be interesting to know the conditions under which this agreement was reached. I know that Dr. Soerdarsano, the Socialist Minister of Home Affairs in Indonesia, stated that the Indonesian Ministers had no facilities for publicly stating their case in Holland, and that the Indonesian Association complain that the Dutch people have never yet been informed of the Indonesian case, even when their own Ministers were in Holland. I believe the Dutch people have never yet heard a single broadcast explaining the Indonesian point of view by any of the able and moderate Indonesians in the Netherlands.

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I hear that a radiotelegraph chess match is to take place between this country and the Soviet Union from June 19th to 22nd. The arrangements have been made by the chess section of the Society for Cultural Relations with the U.S.S.R. and V.O.K.S., the corresponding body in Russia. There will be twelve players on each side, ten men and two women. Each move will be codified as soon as played and forwarded by Cable and Wireless, Ltd. The match itself will be played at the Gambit Chess Rooms, but the public will be able to watch it on demonstration boards in one of the City halls, where there will be an opening ceremony, probably performed by a Cabinet Minister. In a similar match the U.S.A. was beaten by the Soviet Union 15 to 5. Russia is certainly the greatest chess-playing country in the world to-day and everyone was disappointed when the Russians failed to turn up at the recent international tournament. They would not take part in a match in which Spanish Fascism was represented! Chess is a serious part of national life in the U.S.S.R. However, the match against democratic Britain is to take place.

Mr. Lippmann is one of the most responsible of American commentators, and his series of articles in the *Herald-Tribune* on his return from his visit to Europe is of real importance. He visited the American Zone and Vienna; he did not enter the British Zone. His statement that the British have maintained in being organised units of the Wehrmacht cannot therefore be based on personal observation. The truth, as I understand it, is that Prisoners of War are still being used for clearance, transport, mine-sweeping, etc. The working units are made up of groups drawn from different camps which have their own N.C.O's; they work under British supervision with junior German officers, who may or may not be in charge of men with whom they fought in the war. From the point of view of the occupying Power, it is obviously convenient to make use of units in this way rather than to demobilise everyone and then recruit them again for manual work. If we were on good terms with our Russian allies, no further comment would be necessary. But in view of the wild talk that goes on in Germany, about the possibilities of a war against Russia in which the British and Western Germans would be in alliance, the existence of these units may give cause for suspicion of an "underground army," even though they are used merely as hewers of wood and drawers of water.

* * *

Mr. Silkin scored a signal triumph last week. It is true that building the first "new town" in Stevenage will involve displacing the inhabitants of one not very exciting street which will lie, conveniently for industrial purposes, between the railway and the road. When the Minister went down to Stevenage to meet his critics he found most of the houses in this street were placarded with "Hands off our Homes." But the agitation was a newspaper ramp. Some of the correspondents (who followed Mr. Silkin in a score of press cars) went so far as to admit that they were ashamed that they could not tell the exciting story of the Stevenage that is to be. They had been sent down to report a scandalous invasion of the people's homes, and that was the only thing that their papers would accept. In fact Mr. Silkin was soon able to defeat interrupters and to explain to Stevenage, in a speech which was relayed to a big crowd outside the hall and to the threatened street, that people who are to be turned out will be housed at least as well, if not better, than they are now, and that everyone will immensely benefit by the new industries and life that are being planned for the town. This agitation is one of the best examples I have met of a manufactured stunt for political reasons.

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The most remarkable characteristic of the Quakers is their strange habit of acting on their principles. When you inquire into the history of any social improvement, you often find that, though it had many early advocates, the Society of Friends were alone in making a start with a practical experiment. A good example is the history of the Quaker mental hospital in York. Last week The Retreat, of which the Chairman is Arnold Rowntree, celebrated its 150th anniversary. The founders, the annual report for 1945 remarks, knew little about insanity; but William Tuke, its superintendent for 26 years (he took on the job in 1797) actually discovered that, contrary to current opinion, the insane improved if they were fed instead of starved and were kindly treated instead of beaten and chained. From such pieces of quixotic common sense great revolutions spring. To-day The Retreat is not the only mental hospital where methods of humanity and individual care are applied to the treatment of mental illness.

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A *News Chronicle* headline on Wednesday read, "Indians Beaten on the Post." How easy it is for our American cousins, who perversely prefer baseball to cricket, to gather material for an indictment of the British in India! Critic

THE SPANISH DILEMMA

(By a Correspondent recently returned from Spain.)

There is no hero worship spent on the Caudillo in Spain. Though he is sometimes admired for his shrewdness, he is mostly disliked and ridiculed. And while at least one-third of Spain loathes him, even his staunchest supporters see him only as the lesser of two evils, as a necessary super-policeman. Apart from a few young generals and colonels who owe their careers to him, the Caudillo has no friends.

Nor is the Falange of any real help. Once a dynamic and ambitious party, it lost its leader, J. A. Primo de Rivera, before the Civil War ended, and had to submit to Franco's methods of internal balance of power. The Cabinet was always equally composed of Falangists and generals. And while the party was out for a totalitarian revolution, the generals were out for a Right-wing monarchy. This marriage between fire and water soon damped the Falange's energy. Its toughest members turned away in disgust. The masses deserted it. And those who stayed on only did so through self-preservation, either to keep the pay and privileges that Falange bureaucracy afforded, or because, believing that a new regime would persecute them, they thought it necessary to defend their future by defending the State. Apart from the universities, where Falangist ideas still find support, the party is now merely an auxiliary police and a kind of trade union of profiteers. If it called its men to battle, against a monarchist upheaval for instance, it is generally doubted whether it could rally 30,000 men ready to fight. The political picture of Spain is one of insecure generals, whispering monarchists, grumbling industrialists, plotting clandestine Leftists, embittered Falangists and uneasy priests, with a large floating mass, torn between hope of a more decent life and fear of a new civil war and, like the crowd at a bull-fight, only ready to acclaim the Caudillo as long as he avoids the bull.

Franco's methods of avoiding the bull are at once simple and cunning. A lean colonel in the early Thirties, with a modest bearing and a liberal outlook, Franco has now become a plump mystic, haughty and self-complacent, endowed with a sacred mission and receiving private messages, by night, from the spirit of St. James. This mystical trend has not deprived the Caudillo, however, of his Galician shrewdness. He divides his time equally between his confessors and his secret agents. And the aura that allegedly illuminates him when he is in a mystic trance does not stop him from nearly always knowing what is said and decided whenever five Spaniards assemble in Spain. Franco's method is to crush, with the utmost energy, any effort on the part of the Leftists to reorganise their party, and to play a cat-and-mouse game with the Rightists, opposing them to one another, alternatively using bribes and threats, and then soothing them all by vague promises of unspecified changes.

The Leftists' problem is, in one way, simple. They have no doubt that they want Franco out. To them, his regime is utterly detestable. Most of them have spent many years in camps and in prisons, under constant ill-treatment. Brothers or fathers were shot. Though they have served their sentences, they are still social and political pariahs, obliged to live where they are told, and to report every week to the local police. The mere desire to re-establish their old organisations is considered as a crime against the State and punished as such. Any change would therefore be a good change. And no fear of a new civil war restrains their opposition to Franco, as the violence that some people fear would naturally have to come from their side, and they are optimistic in their belief of being able to keep such violence in check.

Their trouble is that they know that they can do very little unaided. In spite of the Caudillo's police, their effort to reorganise has been noteworthy. The Republicans, the Socialists and the Communists all have shadow organisations throughout Spain. The Socialist U.G.T. (Union General de Trabajadores) and the Anarco-syndicalist C.N.T. (Confederacion del Trabajo) share the support of the working class as before the Civil War, and distribute clandestine propaganda and relief funds in all Spanish factories. In the mountains, groups of guerrillas hold the peaks and successfully plan hit-and-run expeditions against Falangist centres below. In recent weeks, for the first time in eight years, strikes have been organised. And in the administration and even among the political police, the Left has a number of friends.

Even so, its leaders freely confess that they have not enough strength to overthrow the regime. Constantly tracked, their shadow committees are periodically destroyed; they often have Franco's agents among them. As for the guerrillas whom the Communist party is organising, they can never hope to be more than an auxiliary force. It is always possible to smuggle into a country explosive charges, pistols and hand-bombs. One cannot smuggle in long-range guns or tanks. An obvious asset in the Communists' hands for the day after Franco falls, or in case of a clash between rival generals, the guerrillas can do little to hasten such a day. The Left-wing leaders are well aware that they have little chance of organising a large rising against Franco. They know even better that if they staged a rising without the Army's consent, or without direct support from abroad, they would be slaughtered by the Right. Their choice is either to turn to the generals, and induce them to overthrow Franco, or hope that strong outside action will strangle the generalissimo. While Giral's job, as they see it, is to obtain this outside action, there is constant speculation, in clandestine Left circles, whether he will succeed or not. According to news filtering through, or collected from foreign broadcasts, the Leftists one day hope for armed help from abroad or economic foreign sanctions that would restore them to power, and, the next day, despairing of such assistance, they resume negotiations with the Right and the Army leaders.

The Army's choice, on the other hand, is not only a choice in tactics. It is a choice whether to keep Franco or not, a choice of the lesser of two evils; and the same dilemma applies to the industrialists, to the Church, and to the Right as a whole. During the first years of the war, the Right openly announced its intention of getting rid of Franco as soon as the Germans were removed from France. Exhausted by its sufferings, the Left opposition seemed to have vanished; and the Falangists were a continual nuisance. On the other hand, Franco's imprudent policy of open support for the Axis was bound to put Spain in a very awkward position when the Allies won. A military Pronunciamento was the obvious solution, to be immediately followed by the destruction of the Falange and the return of the king. As the war proceeded, the monarchists' hopes increased. But so did those of the Left. And by the time the Germans had actually been removed from the Pyrenees border, a strong Left opposition had once more come to life, while a Government-in-exile was being formed and was seeking recognition. Thus, for the Right-wing Opposition, the risk in expelling Franco had become much greater, while the stimulant had decreased with the fall of Falangist influence. The only way to avoid all risk of a revengeful campaign by the Left was to coax Franco into a quiet departure. The Rightists clung for many months to the hope of such a friendly agreement. And Franco naturally fostered these hopes. When the Rightists finally saw that the Caudillo had fooled them, the Leftists had won even more ground. And the choice for the Rightists now was not one of a monarchy agreed upon with Franco, but one of agreement with the Left—a necessary agreement if Franco was to go and if civil war was not to follow his downfall.

The Rightist Opposition then split. Some decided that the risk was too great, and Franco the only alternative. His rule meant international isolation and subsequent internal depression, but no direct suffering, after all, to the Right, who had the money, the food and the very great privileges that Franco dispensed to anyone ready to play his game. In other words, this group thought that the cancer had developed too far. An operation was now too dangerous. Better keep quiet and hope for a miracle, the miracle being that Franco would make his peace with the Allies and be accepted by them. The patient thus could survive though the cancer remained.

The other group stigmatised this policy as shameful and disastrous. Besides, they added, your miracle is out of the question. The Allies will never forgive Franco. And by delaying his unescapable fall you are only increasing the risk. Franco's game here was naturally to strengthen the first group by making capital out of Allied hesitation. In fact, such hesitations are not unnatural. For Franco can only be expelled through violence—either inside, in the form of a Pronunciamento, or from outside in the form of economic sanctions or military intervention. No upheaval from inside could succeed without the Army's backing. No outside pressure would suffice, short of drastic economic sanctions maintained for a certain number of months.

Most of the arguments for or against such measures are somewhat beside the point. The argument against economic sanctions, for instance, is not that they would be ineffective. For though, in a recent Cabinet meeting, Franco said that he could resist them, there is little doubt that he could not, provided there were no large loopholes and that they lasted the necessary length of time. Nor is it that the poorer people would suffer, for these very people are anxious that such measures should be taken. The argument is that a long slump arising from sanctions would increase misery and agitation, that this agitation would increase fear of disorder in the floating mass, and that, six or eight months after sanctions had started the internal set-up in Spain might well resemble that of 1936. In spite of the Leftists' confidence in their capacity to maintain order to-day, it is uncertain to what extent they would be able to do so then.

The other alternative is to "let the Spaniards do the job." Since the Army's help is necessary for this, and since the generals would not take the risk without a reasonable hope of preserving their future, this means a working agreement between the generals and the Left in Spain. In such an agreement the generals would seek a guarantee against future disorder, and they would seek it in an eventual return—whether temporary or not—of the King. The Left would seek provisions against a new military dictatorship, and they would do so in a representative government, free elections and a freely accepted Constitution. Theoretically, none of these claims are irreconcilable. But as the generals would do the job first, and as their bargaining power is temporarily greater, there is an obvious risk in this solution of a new Franco replacing the old.

This solution also requires a certain amount of foreign pressure. For if no pressure were imposed, the Right would at once imagine that the miracle had occurred and that Franco had been forgiven. Whereas, if pressure exceeded a certain limit, everyone would imagine that strong action from outside was at last round the corner. The Left would give up contacts with the Right Opposition, while the generals, through fear of Giral and his friends, would move back towards Franco. Then, if economic sanctions or military intervention did not follow at once, the only result would have been to restore Franco's power for another few months. This, by the way, is exactly what has happened again, just now.

The two courses have their risks. But it is easy to see, by looking at the Spanish picture, that the present game of cross-purposes and of dispersed and contradictory action only serves the generalissimo of Spain.

THE TEAM SPIRIT?

"We want the team spirit." So concluded the Prime Minister in his broadcast on March 3rd appealing for a greater national effort and an improved output per man-hour. He called also for a rebirth of the spirit of Dunkirk.

In what way can the new effort now called into being be expressed? What new circumstances are propitious for its birth? The prospects of higher standards of living? They are too intangible. Stirring and repeated appeals from the leaders of the present popularly elected Labour Government? They are too ephemeral. The vast new policy of nationalisation? But the great mass of the people don't yet know (because they have not been told) how it will all work out, nor how it will affect them personally. Labour's policy and methods of carrying it into effect are passing right over their heads.

In 1940, ownership and personal power and profit were forgotten, and those who managed and those who worked at the bench bent their combined effort to the common weal. Capital was seen at last to be only the means of service, not an end to be served. The new partnership in industry was no longer worker, management and capital; it became instead a living partnership of management and manual worker.

To-day, under nationalisation, the new-found partnership is still there—only the private ownership of capital disappears. But how can it get together? How can the individual worker feel again that everything he does really counts and, moreover, that absenteeism or slackness is a loss to his own team?

Certainly *not* the way we are carrying through our plans so far for nationalisation. Only as an afterthought has there been included in the Coal Bill a clause to provide for joint consultation; and the new Civil Aviation Bill is even less progressive. In fact, it goes backwards in this respect. The Minister of Civil Aviation is (or, at least, the Bill will give him full scope to become) the all-powerful, unquestioned head, with three, largely puppet, Corporation Boards below him. He appoints the Boards of the three Corporations: he can dismiss them. And what scope is there for the employees? In what real sense can they feel to be the productive partners in a tripartite agreement between the public, the planners and the workers? A cynic might summarise the nationalisation measures briefly: "for private enterprise, read State Capitalism." Such is the danger of the remote control of Whitehall replacing the control of the company board of directors, often removed though it is from the works to the City of London.

The very essence of sound social enterprise is centralised planning and decentralised execution. Nationalisation will necessarily lead either to more democratic control of the national economy or it will become more dictatorial and bureaucratic. Such vast experiments as the Tennessee Valley Authority in America (and there are many smaller examples of industrial democratic control in this country) have already done much of our pioneering work in shaping the means of expression of this new spirit of public enterprise.

Here, then, is the proposal. In addition to the executive machinery emanating from functional and technical executive boards, such as envisaged by the Coal Board and its Regional-Area-and-Pit chain of authority, carrying on right down to the coal face, there must *in addition* be equally complete, growing from the coal face upwards, that "grass roots" democracy of which David Lilienthal speaks of in his inspiring book on the T.V.A.

From the self-selected group leadership in the pit, at the bench, or on the aerodrome, the day-to-day problems are cleared on a joint advisory and consultative basis. It has been proved over and over again that the authority of executive organisation is in no way undermined by such consultative machinery, nor is the "time wasted in incessant committees" superfluous or ill-spent, as opponents of the system are too apt, in their ignorance, to assert. Sooner or later bottle-necks in the organisation must be cleared and the problems thrown up by the executive have to be solved. So why not on the spot, without delay, by those most acquainted with the facts and most qualified to devise a solution?

We in this country have set an example to the world, having worked far towards the democratic control of our affairs of state in gaining our political freedom. Surely now is the time to evolve a system for the democratic control of our great industrial resources, and of the means of production, in order to gain our economic freedom.

Geoffrey Cooper

MOSCOW IN MAY

(From our Moscow Correspondent)

May 6th was Press Day. Editorials were published in all the papers on the importance of the Soviet press in peace as in war—that Soviet press which is "the sharpest and most powerful weapon in the hands of the Bolshevik Party." So Lenin said, so Stalin said. Characteristic of the present period is that political education is going at full blast. Leading articles urge everybody to read and reread Stalin's wartime speeches and the *Short History of the Communist Party*. This is not new. Throughout the war, at the height of the Stalingrad battle, when many foreign observers were waxing sentimental over Holy Russia as it was manifesting itself, and when a visiting American General said, "There is only one explanation for Stalingrad, and that is Russian guts," the Communist Party knew that the Russian guts were only part of the story: without the stupendous organisation behind them, the guts would have been simply dragged out by the German war machine. At the height of the Stalingrad battle, *Pravda* kept urging soldiers and workers to read the *Short History*.

Even so, during the war, especially among civilians, political education tended to be neglected. There was "too much else to worry about"—a tendency which the Party press began to condemn seriously by the middle of 1944. To-day, political education is being intensified more than ever. Even during the war, with the delays of the Second Front and all that, there was always a grain of scepticism about the Western Allies at the back of the mind of the politically educated Russian. He had read a dozen times in his history of the Communist Party: "The so-called democratic States do not approve 'the excesses' of Fascist States, and fear any access of strength to the latter. But they fear even more the working-class movement in Europe and the movement of national emancipation in Asia, and regard Fascism as an excellent antidote to these movements." There, says your Russian Communist, is the answer to Spain, Indonesia, General Anders and all the rest of it. Further overwhelming evidence in support of this "continuity" of British policy is quoted day after day in every paper, every magazine, and is the subject of merriment of *Krokodil*. *Krokodil* has its "Botanist's Corner," with a picture of an Indian lotus. "This plant prefers to live freely in the open. It requires no supervision." British promises and attempts to give India independence are not taken seriously or even mentioned. And, even if India does receive independence, the word will no doubt be put in quotation marks as it is already in the case of Transjordan and Bevin's plans for Libya. And you should have seen what *New Times* had to say about negroes in South Africa. There was perhaps a deep meaning in the remark made by a Soviet diplomat at a recent reception: "The part of the British Empire we really admire is New Zealand."

Two ideas which demonstrate the superiority of the Soviet system over any other are being drummed in hard. First, the complete equality of peoples and races (for example, "We shall treat Persian workers on our oil concessions in North Persia as equals, not as coolies as the British oil companies do in South Persia"); secondly, "Ours is the only system where there is no danger of unemployment and economic crises." Connected with this is the hostility of all the "reactionary forces" of the world around, of which Churchill's speech was the most glaring manifestation. And the comment one often hears is: "The Labour Government did not really repudiate Churchill, did it?" It has also been Britain's traditional policy, we are told, to disunite the Slav nations. "They" set up after the last war reactionary governments in Poland, Jugoslavia and Bulgaria; and now it is "Hands off the Slav world." The Russian press reports that on May Day in Warsaw crowds shouted "Down with Mikolajczyk." He has become the symbol of British interference in Slav affairs. The letters by Zilliacus to the New Statesman and Nation about the British Embassy in Warsaw and about Foreign Office officials are extensively quoted.

As champion of the Slav cause, the Soviet Government is taking the strongest possible line over Trieste. The Moscow press ridicules the foreign reports describing the Paris Conference as a gambling table. No, it says, here are people who have come to do serious constructive work, and if the Conference is not to fail, they have got to be reasonable. It is reasonable to give Trieste to Jugoslavia. "Oh, how we long for real peace," the *Izvestia* correspondent in Paris quoted some Frenchmen as saying. Russians heartily agreed, but thought "Hands off the Slav world" very important.

Yet one of the world's paradoxes to-day is that in Russia there is already a greater feeling of peace than elsewhere. May Day in Moscow was a revealing experience. People were genuinely in an exuberant holiday mood. They clearly were not having sleepless nights over "capitalist encirclement" or the threat of war, because their confidence in the Red Army is complete. At the same time, May Day was by no means pronouncedly military, still less militarist in character. It started with a military parade, but this was much shorter than last year, and the million or million and a half workers did not do any goose-stepping or marching but walked—past the Lenin Mausoleum, with Stalin standing on top—just crowds, with hundreds of kids perched on their shoulders, singing jolly pre-war songs—*Moskva moya lubimaya*, "Dear Old Moscow." At the back of their mind, the feeling was, "Well, the British and others can go on sniping at us for a while; they can't keep it up indefinitely. They will want a quiet life, too."

The Five-Year Plan requires an enormous amount of work from everybody. But, after all, it is work on an eight-hour basis, not on a wartime basis of "work till you drop." In wartime they did work eleven, twelve, thirteen, even fourteen hours. Not now. And if heavy industry and transport have top priority, the Five-Year Plan still provides enough other things to give people a strong feeling that "things are improving daily." An old lady whom I used to help during the war in a small way with food recently told me not to take her any more. She and her relatives were getting plenty to eat. Whereupon the former "poor old thing" treated me to a really very impressive tea, with home-made cake, jam and whatnot. And I had dropped in just by accident. It was not a party. This is really typical. The growing abundance of food explains many things in Russia to-day. The food exports to France and Finland are the first important examples of Russia "helping Europe out."

At night millions thronged to central Moscow to see the May Day illuminations—garlands, electric lamps, bunches of electric flowers lighting up Stalin's portrait, flood-lit fountains, enormous pictures of Lenin and Stalin hundreds of feet high up in the heavens, illuminated by coloured searchlights. That was May Day, but the rule is "Don't take things too easy." Enormous panels displayed in Red Square were saying: "Work for the triumph of Communism in our country." The triumph is not to be in the unforeseeable future. With production increasing constantly, Socialism is expected to turn into Communism in fifteen to twenty years. That is what the world looks like in Moscow.

ODE ON A PLASTIC URN

(*After Keats*)

THOU vessel of repulsive ugliness,
Of nauseous hue and more atrocious line,
Whose form and decoration both express
The nadir of industrial design,
What art thou, bulbous urn, at which we gape?
Who gave thee place in our aesthetic plan?
What vested interest, or what Ministry,
What art, what craft, spawned thy swag-bellied shape
And mass-produced exemplars meant to be
The household treasure of the common man?

Thy prototype in China, Persia, Greece,
Of porcelain, earthenware or chrysoprase,
The classic and too perishable piece
Decline to thee, unmentionable vase!
What other age, or people, would consent
To give thee house-room, thou ceramic blot?
What primitive utensil could compare
With thine ungainliness, thou nameless pot?
The functional faïence of toilet ware
Beside thee, must appear an ornament.

O, shrieking shade of Wedgwood and his pards
Who moulded elegance from potter's clay!
When their unvalued handwork lies in shards,
Thou canst not be in fragments swept away.
For thou, yet more intolerable thought,
Wilt not by time, nor accident, be cracked,
Thy loathsome fabric, blast- and atom-proof,
With brede of bunchéd blisters overwrought,
Will long outlast thy temporary roof
And though the heavens fall, survive intact.

Potential relic of our post-war taste,
Last degradation of domestic art,
How Britain's craftsmanship would be disgraced
Wert thou exposed in any export mart!
Thou dost affront the sight at every turn,
Base emblem of "renaissance cultural,"
In every little town in full supply!
Disgusting and abominable urn,
Who speaks to-day for beauty? thou art all
Our age can make for common folk to buy.

SAGITTARIUS

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to Mrs. H. Waycott.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

Lord Mancroft said a married man in the Services should be enabled to regard his wife as he was taught to regard his rifle—something to be kept near him and kept in the best possible condition. —*News Chronicle* report on debate in the House of Lords.

Adults were free yesterday for the first time to play Sunday games in Northampton Corporation parks, though the swings and other apparatus in the playgrounds were locked against the children so as not to compete with the Sunday schools.

But bitter winds and occasional rain put the damper on the grown-ups' first "Brighter" Sunday.

"This is a sad day for me," said Mr. F. C. Lusty, 85, for many years organising secretary of the Lord's Day Observance Society for the Midland and North-Eastern Counties. "But it is significant that the weather should prove so dismal."—*Daily Mirror.*

Townswomen's Guild. Next meeting will be held at . . . Speaker, Brig. Drayson, C.B.E., M.C. Subject, Tiger Shooting.—*Teignmouth Post and Gazette*

A Wolverhampton G.I. bride wore her wedding gown to say "I will" by 'phone to Oklahoma —*Sunday Express.*

MONTEVERDI'S VESPERS

A MUSICAL event of the first magnitude occurred at the Central Hall last Tuesday, and I only wish I had known of it in time to draw attention to it in these columns a fortnight ago. It was nothing less than the first English performance of one of Monteverdi's four largest and most important extant compositions: the *Vespers* which he wrote in 1610. For this wonderful experience we have to thank the enterprise of Morley College, Walter Goehr's thorough musicianship (badly needed in a work bristling with difficulties of style and balance) and the scholarship of Dr. Hans Redlich, who produced in 1934 the first practicable modern edition of this forgotten Baroque masterpiece.

Liturgically, Vespers are an optional addition to the Mass, and Monteverdi has here produced a work comparable in scale and lay-out to a fairly elaborate Mass. It consists of a chain of pieces which may be loosely described under the collective name of motet, the words of which derive from various sources: Psalms 110 and 122, extracts from *The Song of Solomon*, and other traditional liturgical material, including a final *Magnificat*. But the richness and variety of Monteverdi's setting go far beyond anything which can have been customary in the offices of the Church. Look, for example, at the scoring. Dr. Redlich, who has done little more than translate into modern terms the stated requirements of the original, specifies 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 3 bassoons, strings, solo viola da gamba, harpsichord and organ. Brass was something of a Venetian speciality, as we can see in the orchestral sonatas of Gabrieli; and it may be that Monteverdi laid out his *Vespers* with an eye to the post of Choirmaster at St. Mark's which he obtained three years later. Whether or not this is so, the scoring for chorus and orchestra has a Venetian translucency and magnificence. Indeed the whole work is constantly evocative of Italian painting of the High Renaissance in its combination of religious feeling with the utmost boldness and brilliance of handling. I doubt if any music-lover could sit through the *Sonata sopra Sancta Maria* which forms the climax of the first part of the *Vespers* without realising that he was in the presence of a masterpiece of the first order. This is the only part of the work which has been at all widely performed—in more or less bastard versions for orchestra alone; as Monteverdi conceived it, it is a kind of orchestral *passacaglia* on a choral *canto fermo* to the words "*Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis*." Against an enormously varied figuration of strings and brass the noble Gregorian melody strikes in eleven times, always in a grave slow-moving unison, and always with thrilling effect; and it is charactéristic of Monteverdi that he should constantly vary even the *canto fermo* itself in the matter of accent and caesura, at one point going so far as to divide each note from its successor by a minim rest.

It is evident that monotony was of all faults the most intolerable to Monteverdi's genius. Though he was a master of the pure *a capella* style (and wished perhaps to demonstrate as much in the six-part Mass *In illo tempore* which he prefixed to his *Vespers*) in the *Vespers* themselves he makes use of a bewildering variety of styles. One can distinguish at least three main elements: Gregorian plainsong, pure sixteenth-century choral polyphony and the *stilo nuovo* of dramatic monody. But there are also passages of vocal *coloratura* of an almost Oriental length and intricacy, echo effects of all sorts, and a good deal of vocal writing in that *al fresco* style, full of dotted notes, which clearly derives from the characteristics of brass instruments. And all these styles are used, not only in succession, but simultaneously: for example, there is a passage in the *Magnificat* where the sopranos sustain a Gregorian melody while tenor solo and "echo" disport themselves in rapid *coloratura* fragments underneath. Nothing in the work is more curious and fascinating than the setting for solo voices of passages from *The Song of Solomon*: *Nigra sum* ("I am black, but comely") and *Pulchra es* ("Thou art beautiful, O my love.") Until quite recently the passionate language of this poem was universally held to be an expression of the mutual love of Christ and the Church, but Monteverdi's settings are so human and so lyrical that one can almost believe him to have taken the more modern view! For *Nigra sum* he adopts a melodic style closely akin to that of his great *Lamento d'Arianna* which had swept through Italy two years before; ravishing indeed (and ravishingly sung by Miss Field-Hyde) is the passage "For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth"; it is like a musical picture in miniature, of the Renaissance itself.

It is natural to ask whether all this stylistic variety does not produce an effect of incongruity, and one can only reply with a flat "No, thanks to the powerfully individual genius of this composer, who stamps everything as his own." But such an equilibrium of styles could not last: it depended not only upon the man, but upon the unique moment in history at which he wrote—and also upon the overwhelmingly *Italian* colour of the whole score, which at moments seems almost to anticipate the Verdi of the *Requiem* and *Otello*.

It is the fate of artists who take part in something really fresh and valuable to receive less critical comment than Miss X and Mr. Y who are doubtless at this very moment pounding their way through Tchaikovsky No. 1 and Rachmaninov No. 2. Though I have mentioned only one soloist, all were admirable—as were also the orchestra and (but for uncertainties of pitch) the choir. If public opinion seems to demand it, there is a chance that the *Vespers* may be repeated in the near future; and in that event I implore London concert-goers to absent themselves on no account whatever.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

NEW PLAYS

The Wind is Ninety, at the Apollo. It is nice to see one of these simple American families turning up once again on one of those dear old constructivist sets without props and without scenery: though I thought I discerned a trace of irritation on the face of Pop Henry Oscar when, for the fifth time, he read a newspaper that wasn't there. Plot: the spirit of a fighter pilot returns to watch the news of his death in action broken to his family. No detail is left out in this spectacle of the most harrowing of all tragedies. All the devices of pathos are used to keep the audience weeping. The play is fiendishly well acted, especially by Miss Dulcie Gray as the wife, and it seems wrong to criticise any performance which might conceivably bring comfort to the bereaved. But catharsis is one thing, being put through the mangle another: and all friends of the American people must still marvel at the brazen-heartedness which makes them capable of using sentimentality as coldly and deliberately as they use sex, with no higher purpose than to bring 'em in and knock 'em flat.

To take away the taste of this three-hour traffic in our emotions nothing could be better than *Sweetest and Lowest* at the Ambassador's. Issimus is surely the best of the three, even if Sissimus ought to be the title. In the days when the halfpenny stamp was purple, what is now called sophisticated was known as "naughty," and the principal joke theme was heterosexual infidelity. Nowadays we only use that joke to burlesque it, and in this third edition of *Sweet and Low* the main subject of the naughty lines has changed. Social History Question. The homosexual joke, once limited to the Music Hall, is now accepted in the best revue circles. When the cycle is completed, and the subject has gone into honourable retirement with mothers-in-law and midinettes, is it permissible to guess what will be the accepted naughtiness of edition Number Ten? So far, Number Three gives us the best and most prettily ironical décor (Mr. Sutcliffe's), the best text (Mr. Melville's) and the best cast; for the younger and lesser known members of the company, Miss Gretchen Franklin in particular, seem to have caught the lightness and clarity of touch shown by Miss Gingold and her co-equal. Mr. Kendall has no difficulty in turning an hilarious audience as quiet as stone for five minutes while he tells us what it feels like to be an invoice clerk after three years in Bomber Command.

STEPHEN POTTER

RADIO NOTES

Mr. Arthur Mann's plea, published a month ago in *The Times*, for a half-hour news period at 9 p.m., complete with commentary, talks, and relevant etceteras, is no doubt a logical one: it would have a concentrating effect and thus help to dispel the impression of light-headed meandering which the day's programmes usually produce; yet, as things are, one can understand the B.B.C.'s unwillingness thus to weigh down the Home Service with a solid wedge of "improvement" in the middle of the evening. When Programme C is added to us this objection would lapse: those who want only the headlines will be able to pass straight on to something else—somewhere. But Programme C will have other responsibilities, chief among them *repeats*, *series* and *poetry*. As a feature of policy such constants would base the programme on a firm structure, giving the listener a real continuity of interest. Two repeats (on different wavelengths) of any considerable broadcast should be the rule, not the exception; and all three programmes could here be made to contribute to each other's fare, and so avoid the charge of exclusiveness and specialisation which is at present levelled at the tripartite scheme. (Incidentally, Listener Research would get a sounder judgment of the success of a broadcast if the panels were always asked to produce their report on the repeat.

On the musical side we may hope to find a more consistent use of serial schemes, together with some plan for avoiding the type of programme-making—prevalent during the last seventy years—which places a Beethoven symphony and a showy concerto in the centre and flanks them with an overture, an aria and some ballet music. One or two works at a time are nearly always long enough to make a radio concert. As for the series, the possibilities are very numerous. Why not return to the plan of those excellent "Foundations of Music" programmes which were so successful in years gone by? I can think of few experiences more delightful—or more instructive—than gradually to work through *all* the songs of Schubert, Schumann, Fauré and Wolf, parcelled out among a team of singers that would include Aksel Schiotz, Flora Nielsen and Peter Pears. All kinds of neglected beauties would be revealed by this method. In the same way many people would derive a fresh view of Haydn from hearing all his symphonies and chamber music in chronological sequence, rather than from a handful of works repeated at irregular intervals. And after the very sensitive performance of Beethoven's Violin Sonata in G, op. 96, by Max Rostal and Franz Osborn, some weeks ago, it would seem logical to invite these admirable artists to give us the whole series. Thinking along the same lines, I believe it would contribute greatly to our knowledge of a piece of music to hear several different interpretations of it within one week; and here the gramophone department would play an important part, since so many of the best interpreters are only available to us at present in recorded form. But "live" performers would be asked to study their colleagues' renderings in order, if possible, to clarify their own means of throwing light on the piece. In these days of "master" recordings we are all apt to permit the performance of one famous artist or conductor to *solidify* a classic for us. This way lies boredom and death, for great music can only be kept alive by a constant process of revaluation.

RECOMMENDATIONS.—*Sunday, May 19th.* Symphony Concert (2.30 p.m.); Sidney Godolphin (A. L. Rowse, West of England, 10.38 p.m.); Maurice Cole (11.3 p.m.).

Monday, May 20th. Scherzo fantastique by Suk (6.45 p.m.); If You'd Lived Then (G. M. Young, 7.40 p.m.); Debussy (11.33 p.m.).

Tuesday, May 21st. Atomic Warfare and the Christian Faith (10 p.m.).

Wednesday, May 22nd. Music of our time (7.40 p.m.).

Thursday, May 23rd. Telepathy (7.45 p.m.).

Friday, May 24th. My Children—Are they worth it? (6.20 p.m.) John Clare (Geoffrey Grigson, 11.30 p.m.); Milhaud (11.50 p.m.).

Saturday, May 26th. Symphony Concert (2.30 p.m.); Dvorak (11.3 p.m.).

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

THE MOVIES

March of Time: "Report on Greece," "Wanted —More Homes," "Life with Baby."

"Wanted for Murder," at the Gaumont.

"Dragonwyck," at the Odeon.

Among the three current issues of "The March of Time," by far the best and the most urgent is *Report on Greece*, to be seen at the Odeon. The news reels—understandably perhaps—have shown us very little of what has been going on there since the fighting last year. Here, then, is a brief sketch of events in Greece during and since the war, given without too pronounced a bias. Indeed, following the lopsided view of Palestine offered in a recent number, this summing-up of Greece is remarkably fair, and a good deal more cautious in its comments on British policy than many of us would be ourselves. The commentary makes it plain that our much-criticised "interference" has been neither on the one hand diabolical nor on the other disinterested. Time has marched on since the completion of this film, which ends with the statement that, *if* the British will permit free elections, Greece will get the Government she wants. Things haven't turned out quite so simply; but the urgency of *Report on Greece* lies in its picture, fragmentarily conveyed, of national sacrifice and destruction. To the vast majority in an average audience these scenes of smashed life-lines, of bread sold in the black market, of deflation and political unrest, of a nation kept going only by imports granted from abroad, will come as a considerable shock; and, well-informed or not, we all need reminding. The other two "March of Time" issues deal with the housing shortage in America—2,000,000 houses needed, a national drive, opposition of the private builder, use of prefabs.—and with the scientific study of child behaviour from birth onwards. In the second of these films, the baby performs in a kind of one-way observation dome, and its obvious enjoyment compares favourably with the grim intentness of the unseen watchers. The spectacle is easy enough to deride, but there can be little doubt that this branch of research into human behaviour justifies itself both theoretically and practically.

A fortnight ago I commented on the reluctance of English studios to deal with crime stories. Since then I have heard news of a Simenon tale being filmed (though I should have preferred that undertaking to be wholly French), and here is a thoroughly English production, a variant of the Jack the Ripper theme, called *Wanted for Murder*. The new gentleman Jack, 20th-century model, strangles girls in the London parks and has, as an excuse for sympathy, a grandfather on the distaff side famous in his day as "the happy hangman." I'm afraid the psychology doesn't go very deep; grandpa's legendary influence, in fact, pops up as an old device of melodrama. Still, despite its conventional framework, *Wanted for Murder* has solid qualities of tension and local colour. Mr. Eric Portman as the handsome and helpless addict gains our uneasy sympathy, and Messrs. Roland Culver, Stanley Holloway and Bill Shine are the best bunch out of New Scotland Yard I've seen.

Dragonwyck—well-named—is a weary tale about an aristocrat in the 'forties who likes to murder his wives with oleander shrubs. "You'll regret," says one of the characters, "the day you came to Dragonwyck." We do.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

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JONATHAN CAPE

Correspondence

BRITAIN AND EGYPT

Sir,—After a somewhat shaky start with such problems as Indonesia, Indo-China, Greece, etc.—legacies in effect of the old regime—the Labour Government does seem to be settling down to a steadier, more confident, stroke in foreign affairs. And Lord Stansgate, whose approach to the Indian problem in 1929 must be remembered to his credit, is indeed to be congratulated on having introduced into Anglo-Egyptian relations a new spirit which, if developed on the plane of mutual trust, cannot but result in the consolidation of lasting friendship and co-operation between the two countries and, indeed, between Great Britain and the whole Arab world. The Arab is naturally disposed to like the Briton—perhaps because of their common love of freedom—but he has never been enamoured of British imperialism as seen in action in the Middle East during the last few generations. As Mr. Clement Davies remarked in the House, the presence of British troops on Egyptian soil is incompatible with Egyptian sovereignty; and that is the crux.

The chagrin of the old gang is natural but quite irrelevant. The world of 1946 is not the world of 1936, as Mr. Morrison justly remarked; but perhaps the most remarkable feature of the whole debate was the failure of any member to remind the House of the existence of the Uno Security Council which, in the event of a British withdrawal from Egypt, is surely the obvious body to study and discuss the strategic contribution that Egypt can make to world security. The matter was discussed as if the problem was solely one of British imperial interests in the balance with Egyptian sensibilities: a problem in a vacuum which could be considered without reference to its possible repercussions in other directions. No one suggested, for instance, the possibility that, if we should persist in a claim to effective guardianship of the Suez Canal lying wholly within Egyptian territory, the Soviet Union would regard it as a precedent in favour of its own claim to similar guardianship of the Turkish Straits. Such questions of universal moment should surely be dealt with not in terms of power politics but within the framework of Uno.

Mr. Eden's statement that the 1936 treaty was freely accepted by the Egyptian Government of the day is only technically true, for it is surely common knowledge that Mustafa Nahas Pasha only signed the document because he knew that at that stage the British Government was not prepared to concede more favourable terms in response to Egypt's demand for complete independence. It is also true enough that Britain rendered great services to Egypt during the recent war in saving her from Axis invasion; but it is surely equally true that, if British troops had not at the time been in occupation of Egypt, there would never have been any threat of such invasion. If British troops had been in occupation of Turkey, that country would certainly have been invaded by the Axis; but it wasn't. On the other hand, it is also true that, in the matter of supplies, services and facilities, Egypt rendered signal services to Britain and the Allies: as is sufficiently indicated by the very substantial sum of about £400 million, which represents the net balance in terms of money of Britain's indebtedness to Egypt.

Now that this momentous decision has been made to the manifest satisfaction of Egypt and all her Arab neighbours, it is of the utmost importance that the good will accruing therefrom should not be dissipated by undue prolongation of the negotiations by meticulous discussions on matters of detail. The question of the Sudan will presumably be left over for consideration at a later date between the two countries as equal partners in the condominium. But all other points pertinent to the restoration of complete sovereign independence to Egypt can and should be disposed of with the utmost despatch; and there would seem to be no valid reason why the country should not be clear of the last remnants of the British forces by the end of this year. It would probably indeed be easier for the British Government to arrange the details of its future co-operation in the defence of the country and the Canal, should occasion for such co-operation arise, with a sovereign Egyptian Government than to seek now to make the withdrawal conditional on the previous acceptance of obligations that may not prove palatable to the Egyptian Government and people. A very good start has been made. A very good impression has been created. It only remains to exploit them both rapidly in the interests of permanent Anglo-Egyptian friendship.

18 Acol Road, N.W.6. H. St. J. B. Philby

PALESTINE

Sir,—Mr. Crossman's sympathetic vindication of Zionist violence in Palestine explains one of the puzzling features of the Anglo-American Report. This is the omission, except for one passing reference to the Arab point of view, of the ruling international treaty governing Palestine. The Covenant of the League of Nations, while setting Palestine under trusteeship on behalf of its native inhabitants, whose welfare and development are the object of the period of tutelage, recognises the independence of the people, "subject to the rendering of administrative advice and assistance until such time as they are able to stand alone."

The Hymans Report of 1922, which Lord Balfour accepted as the representative of Great Britain, included the assumption, voiced by M. Hymans, that any provision of any mandate which conflicted with the Covenant was automatically void. The same pledge was contained in the Covenant itself, by which all League members, including Britain, promised to annul any treaty which they found to be inconsistent with the Covenant (Article 20).

That Article 22 of the Covenant, and not the ambiguous mandate, is the law of Palestine, was acknowledged by Lord Balfour, when he stated at the League Council in 1922, regarding the mandate :—

> It has been represented that the interests of the Arabs are not sufficiently safeguarded, but the most anxious attention has been paid to the position and interests of the Arab population by the British Government, and there is no wish or intention that the provision of a Jewish home in Palestine should in any way injure the best interests of the Arabs. Every precaution has been taken that the provision of a Jewish home shall not encroach upon the interests and susceptibilities of any section of the population.

Lord Balfour's partiality for the Jews, and his ignorance of the Arabs, accounted, no doubt, for his failure to appreciate the damage done to Palestine by political Zionism, which has kept the country destroyed by war for a generation.

What is really surprising, in spite of the understandable bias of Mr. Crossman—for everyone is biased in this matter on one side or the other—is the accusation of "illegality" made against the 1939 policy. Certainly the judges members of the Commission would not have used such a term. The legal obligation of the Covenant is unmistakable; it is to give independence to the native inhabitants of Palestine, as they were in 1919. If the Commission were really in doubt on the law, and not merely agitated about Jewish votes here and in the States, why did they not act according to the mandate, and recommend referring the interpretation to the Permanent Court? The judicial members, of course, could be in no doubt what the opinion of the Court would be.

The assessment of "injustice" in the attempt to fulfil the Covenant, and to safeguard the Arab peasantry from the betrayal of their own landlords and the rapacity of Zionist penetration, is of course a matter of personal prejudice, and will vary in individual cases.

70 Chancery Lane, W.C.2 Freda White

[Mr. Crossman writes: "I am sorry that Miss

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White not only disagrees with me, but believes that the recommendations of my colleagues and myself were due to our being 'agitated about Jewish votes.' Such are the amenities of controversy. I called the 1939 White Paper 'illegal,' because the Mandates Commission of the League of Nations, despite the brilliant advocacy of Malcolm MacDonald, firmly decided that it was not in accordance with the terms of the Mandate. If the British Government in 1939 wished to make Jewish immigration dependent on Arab consent, then its proper course was to state boldly that the terms of the Mandate had become unworkable and needed revision. It chose, however, to argue most disingenuously that the White Paper was in accord with the Mandate. Hence the illegality of the White Paper."—Ed., *N.S. & N.*]

SOCIALISM AND DEMOCRACY

Sir,—May I, as a Conservative, add a word of commendation to the approval, which, from other quarters, has no doubt greeted the letters, published in your issue of April 27th, from Mr. Zilliacus and "New Zealander."

It must indeed be galling for ideologically correct Marxists to be denounced as "white ants" and "burrowers" by fellow Left-wingers. The fact is, of course, that Mr. Zilliacus and Mr. Jack Lee are the true Socialists, while those who attack them are crypto-Liberals, or perhaps even crypto-Tories.

The choice before us to-day lies, not simply between one political party and another, but between two fundamentally opposed political systems: Parliamentary Democracy on the one hand, and the Socialist State on the other.

Members of the British Labour Party, when pressed, will agree that they are Socialists and that their aim is to establish State Socialism in this country. The trouble is that, with the exception of those who, like Mr. Zilliacus and myself, have actually experienced the Socialist State at first hand, extremely few people in this country have any idea of what is implied by State Socialism.

At the General Election we were always being told about the achievements of Socialism in New Zealand; but, as "New Zealander" points out, "bigger pensions and more leisure for bigger and better race meetings and football matches are not Socialism." The essence of Socialism is the strict regimentation of labour as well as of capital, and, under a single party system, the subordination of the individual to the State in every aspect of public and private life. To talk, as Professor Cole does in a recent pamphlet, of "Liberal Socialism" is simply a contradiction of terms.

Now, it is only to be expected that I, as a Conservative, should dislike these aspects of Socialism. What is confusing is to find politicians, who make use of the Socialist label, yet reject many of the essential implications of Socialism. To take only one example: in the Soviet Union and in the other countries where, more recently, the Socialist State has been realised, the State possesses, in peacetime, far wider powers for the direction and control of labour than were ever held by our wartime Government under the Essential Work Order. Yet to-day our so-called Socialist Government, while lightheartedly boasting of the measures which it is taking to nationalise industry and finance, at the same time throws out coy hints that these measures are to be accompanied by a relaxation of the existing controls on labour, without which any schemes of Socialisation are bound to become a farce. This can only mean either that the Government for the time being and in order not to alienate too many of their more squeamish supporters, are masking their true intentions in this respect, or else that they are pursuing a policy of half-measures, which, though admittedly less brutal than true Socialism, is also likely to prove considerably less efficient.

My Labour opponent in the General Election even promised a foreign policy based on International Socialism, if Labour were returned to power. In the event, of course, nothing of the kind has materialised. I am, once again, well content, for in this respect I have always preached what Marshal Stalin practises, namely, that foreign policy should not be based on ideological considerations. But one cannot blame Mr. Zilliacus and friends, who no doubt lavished the same promises on their electors as did my Socialist opponent, for being far from pleased when the Government go so far in the opposite direction as to launch, immediately on coming to power, into a series of quarrels with the Soviet Union, while maintaining normal diplomatic relations with a declared Fascist like General Franco, or, for that matter, when they deliberately obstruct the spread of Socialism and Proletarian solidarity in Europe by openly opposing the formation of the Social Unity Party in Germany.

All this "diversionism," to borrow the Soviet technical term, is very confusing to the public, and, in the interests of truth and clarity, both the opponents of Socialism and its champions should be grateful to Mr. Zilliacus and to the anonymous "New Zealander" for their forthrightness in showing to the former what they are fighting against and to the latter (whose need for enlightenment is perhaps greater) what they are fighting for.

House of Commons — Fitzroy Maclean

Sir,—Mr. Quintin Hogg says, "What shocks us (the Tories) about Mr. Zilliacus and his friends . . . is the complete absence from all their speaking and writing of anything which remotely resembles the humanist and Christian traditions on which the whole artistic, literary and ethical culture of Western Europe is founded." He further questions my right to call myself a member of the Labour Party and alleges that my sympathies "obviously lie elsewhere."

I joined the Labour Party 27 years ago when I was demobilised after the first World War. I have stuck to it ever since, for I believe in the kind of Socialism that stands for fulfilling the promise of Liberalism. My crime in Mr. Quintin Hogg's eyes is that I keep urging the Labour Government to carry out the foreign policy of the Labour Party as recorded in its Report on "The International Post-War Settlement." That Report says that Socialism is fundamentally necessary to the attainment of our international aims and in particular to the economic reconstruction of Europe and to the revival and establishment of democracy and political freedom in Europe.

I believe that to be true and important. If one wills the end one must will the means: if we want Socialist reconstruction in Europe we must face the fact that we can get it only through the co-operation and unity of all parties in Europe that believe in Socialist reconstruction. This means in particular the Socialist and Communist Parties. They are already co-operating in every country in Europe that has been in the war (except Denmark, where the Social Democrats were semi-appeasers). In France, Belgium, Hungary and Italy reaction, and probably some form of Fascism, would triumph if the Socialists and Communists did not co-operate. In Germany a whole series of witnesses worthy of credence, some testifying publicly, others who have spoken to me privately (including British officers and civilians from our zone, an American officer from the Office of Strategic Surveys from the American zone, as well as Germans from both zones and some of our own Members of Parliament) have made it clear that reaction and Fascism in Germany are recovering morally in the Western zone and that the main bar to their staging a political come-back is working-class unity, which the Labour Government's and Labour Party's present policy is trying to wreck.

If you believe in restoring Capitalism in Europe (which means destroying democracy), as the Tories do, it is logical to want a Western bloc which will attach itself to the United States, will be based on the triumph of the Right in the constituent countries and will be anti-Soviet and anti-Left in Europe and Asia. That, incidentally, would set the course for the third

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METHUEN

World War, just as the Tories' defence of the old social order helped to land us in the second World War.

But if we want to apply the Labour Party's foreign policy and if we believe that Socialism is essential to successful economic reconstruction and to the revival of democracy in Europe, then we must work for implementing the Anglo-Soviet Alliance and for encouraging the co-operation and unity of Socialists and Communists in all countries where both are strong enough to count. And where, as in the Soviet Union and parts of Eastern Europe, most or all of the working-class leadership is in Communist hands, we must work with the Communists.

It is characteristic of the colossal self-righteousness of the Tories that after losing the last peace through appeasing Fascism they want to lose the next through fighting Communism.

But I, recalling the long role of cruelty, perfidy, shame and horror for which they were responsible between the wars, shudder when Mr. Churchill pats the Labour Government on the back for " its manly antagonism to international Communism at home and abroad," and laugh when Mr. Quintin Hogg twitters about Tory attachment to the values of Western Civilisation. K. ZILLIACUS

P.S.—As for Mr. Romer, he may not think of himself as an emigré, but the point is he is a voluntary exile because he does not approve of the present regime in his country. I would say to Mr. Tom Taylor that I myself publicly paid tribute to what I saw of the splendid work of Unrra in Yugoslavia once they got on the job, but they were remarkably slow and sticky in starting for the political reasons mentioned.

SCIENTISTS AND SECRECY

SIR,—Having attended the trial of Dr. Alan Nunn May, I am startled by the assumption of you and your correspondents that his behaviour was a model to all scientists and likely to serve the interests of humanity. However fine a physicist he was, the man was a pathetic ass, and his behaviour laid an axe at the principles which must be at the root of any community, whether capitalist, socialist or communist. He voluntarily accepted a position in the war organisation of the Allies, and before he took up this employment signed a statement binding himself not to give any information concerning his activities to any unauthorised person, and acknowledged that he would become subject to proceedings under the Official Secrets Act if he broke that undertaking. When he came to the conclusion that his researches were contributing to a situation dangerous to mankind unless they were made public, his duty was plain. He could not disclose the researches because of his undertaking. But he could have resigned, which would have caused serious inconvenience to the authorities, and explained his reasons to his fellow scientists and to the general public. He did nothing of the sort. He broke his undertaking; and I do not see how any community can hold together if the idea of the sacredness of a contract is lost. He handed notes of his researches and samples of the metal he had been using in his experiments to a man who was known to him simply as a Russian agent, and who was so little of a scientist that, as Dr. May pathetically related in his statement, conversation between them on atomic research was practically impossible.

There was obviously a possible pitfall in these proceedings. Before the war Nazi and Fascist agents and *agents provocateurs* frequently pretended to be acting for Russia; and we have still General Franco and Colonel Peron with us. It was made obvious during the trial that Dr. May was the last person in the world to be able to detect such a pitfall. His proceedings were from start to finish idiotic. For first he handed over his notes and samples to the Russian agent, because, he said, he wished to diffuse his knowledge for humane motives; but at the same time he accepted a sum of money which this Russian agent pressed upon him, a step which surely casts a shade of improbability on your statement that if he had not pleaded guilty " his colleagues in the scientific world " would have given him " their active support." Then he went into reverse and failed to keep an appointment with another agent in London, Then, when the police approached him, he made a statement admitting his guilt. From that, however, he illogically withheld the name of the Russian agent. But he later robbed that reticence of its dignity by disclosing that the agent was a Russian. Though Sir Hartley Shawcross conducted the prosecution with the utmost restraint and showed a proper sensitiveness to the tragedy of the occasion, which was made almost unendurable by the collapsed appearance of the prisoner in the dock, the predominant impression left by the trial was one of extraordinary fatuity. It was obviously this which inspired Mr. Justice Oliver's remark about " crass conceit," and I must own that while that comment seemed to me to err on the robust side, it was alarming to think that a person so destitute of common sense as Dr. May should have taken such a huge responsibility on himself. There is no use confusing the problem of the atomic bomb by attempting to make a martyr of this unhappy blunderer, who broke an undertaking into which he had entered as a free agent and took money for so doing.

REBECCA WEST

[This journal said nothing in defence of Dr. May's idiotic behaviour. But that does not affect the issue of secrecy about which the scientific world is profoundly concerned.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

FOOD PARCELS

SIR,—Every day now as one reads one's morning correspondence one is filled with an increasing sense of impotent despair. Here are extracts from a letter just received from an address in London:

> I am a German-born British subject—my husband being an Indian—and was until the outbreak of war resident in Berlin. My parents, both over 70, are still living in Berlin. My mother is in very poor health—she lost about 50lbs. of weight since last May, and has only one wish—to see me, her only child . . . My hopes to ease my parents' lot by sending food parcels which I easily could have afforded out of our rations have also proved futile . . . I have the feeling they will die of starvation if I cannot soon do something drastic to help them . . . I hope you will excuse my troubling you, but I know you will understand my terrible worries as regards them.

As you are aware, it is still impossible to send food parcels to Germany or anywhere else on the Continent of Europe. If this inhumanity is allowed to continue month after month it will end by destroying us all. Whatever may be the rights or wrongs of our public policy, that the springs of private charity should be deliberately dried up is an outrage. I believe many of your readers would agree. Cannot then every one of them write to the Prime Minister?

VICTOR GOLLANCZ

MIHAILOVITCH

SIR,—I must apologise that my original letter contained no less than three mistakes in dates. None of them affect the issue, but they certainly are confusing. The poster I mentioned was dated November 12th, 1944, and was taken down by us in December. This is obvious from the context of my letter, as I stated that we left Yugoslavia in January 1945.

Of course I am not accusing H.M.G. of a " deliberate lie " to Tito. I merely state as a fact that we were with Mihailovitch until January 1945, and that any statement to the contrary was incorrect. I think I am in a better position to know the facts than Brigadier Maclean or anybody else. I admit that the rights and wrongs of the Tito-Mihailovitch question may be a matter of opinion. But I and my party were with the latter from August 1942 until January 1945 and it is absurd for anyone to dispute the fact.

J. L. HASPER

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

"Implacable I, the old implacable sea": the sea in all its aspects, and the Englishmen who have sailed it since the anonymous Old English *scop* wrote *The Seafarer*, are the twin themes of Mr. Lloyd's anthology.* He has ranged widely to make his selection and gathered together much unfamiliar material, but as a book about the sea it suffers from the fact that its sources are almost entirely from the writings of landsmen and naval officers; and landsmen tend to sentimentalise the sea, while for naval officers there have always been compensations beyond the lot of the common sailor. "A ship," said Johnson, from whom Mr. Lloyd quotes, "is worse than a jail. There is, in a jail, better air, better company, better conveniency of every kind; and a ship has the additional disadvantage of being in danger." Mr. Lloyd's anthology is confined mainly to the opinions of the jailers and the visitors; the jail-birds do not speak. Its comprehensiveness is limited by its title, for two of the great, perhaps *the* greatest writers on the sea in our language—men who served as common sailors—are debarred from it because they were American, Melville and Dana, and the sense of loss at their omission is proportionate to their greatness. Of the two, Dana—"my friend Dana," Melville called him—is the less well-known, and one is grateful for a new edition of *Two Years Before the Mast*.†

Richard Henry Dana came of a distinguished New England family; his father was one of Massachusett's first poets and the editor of America's earliest critical journal. To his contemporaries he appeared, perhaps, a crank: he devoted his life as a lawyer to furthering the rights of seamen—he followed up *Two Years Before the Mast* with *The Seaman's Friend*, a lawbook for sailors—and the cause of anti-slavery. In 1876 he would have been United States Minister to Great Britain, but the Senate refused to ratify the appointment. From a worldly point of view his life was a record largely of frustration, and he was conscious of it: "My great success—my book—was a boy's work, done before I came to the Bar"; written, in fact, in 1839, when he was twenty-four. Its success was instantaneous. In Liverpool two thousand sailors bought the book in a single day: they recognised it as "a voice from the forecastle," as Dana himself called it. It was avowedly a propagandist work:

> If it shall interest the general reader, and call more attention to the welfare of seamen, or give any information as to their real condition, which may serve to raise them in the rank of beings, and to promote in any measure their religious and moral improvement, and diminish the hardships of their daily life, the end of its publication will be answered.

But it is far from being merely an *Uncle Tom's Cabin* of the sea.

Dana had made his voyage round the Horn to California when he was nineteen and still an undergraduate at Harvard. Three years after him Melville, aged eighteen, made his first voyage and, in 1849, described it in *Redburn*, as autobiographical a novel as ever was written. Comparison between *Redburn* and *Two Years Before the Mast* is inevitable. And here it is necessary to quarrel with Mr. Lewis Mumford, who says in his book on Melville:

> While Dana wrote directly and straightforwardly, he was not a creator of character, and he had no gift of selection: in order to realise the sea, he scatters tackle, blocks, mainsails, booms, compasses, bulwarks, bulkheads on every page of the narrative. . . . *Two Years Before the Mast* sounds like a Bluejacket's Manual. . . . In Melville's work the lingo enters incidentally; and one encounters, not the physical ship of the shipwright, but the ship in action, the ship that is part of the sailor's consciousness—in brief, the living ship as contrasted with an abstract compendium of names and relationships. The same is true of his characters. Dana describes his shipmates accurately enough: Melville embodies them . . . they live as authentically, within their narrow compass, as Colonel Newcome or Samuel Weller. That is art; and even in his minor passages, Melville was an artist.

That is true, but so far from the whole truth as to be most unjust to Dana, who was also an artist. Of course *Redburn* is more vivid, more intense, more dramatic; that is as one would expect; but it is not necessarily a better book than Dana's. In my view, it is not as good. *Redburn* is interesting mainly for the light it throws on Melville; and here he is, on his way to join his ship, wearing his brother's shooting jacket and carrying his brother's fowling piece:

> Cold, bitter cold as December, and bleak as its blasts, seemed the world then to me; there is no misanthrope like a boy disappointed; and such was I, with the warm soul of me flogged out by adversity . . . After dinner the few passengers, waked up from their roast-beef and mutton, became a little more sociable. Not with me, for the scent and savour of poverty was upon me, and they all cast toward me their evil eyes and cold suspicious glances, as I sat apart, though among them. I felt that desperation which only a pauper knows . . . I stood their gazing some time, but at last could stand it no more. I pushed my seat right up before the most insolent gazer, a short fat man, with a plethora of cravat round his neck, and fixing my gaze on his, gave him more gazes than he sent. This somewhat embarrassed him, and he looked round for someone to take hold of me; but no one coming, he pretended to be very busy counting the gilded wooden beams overhead. I then turned to the next gazer, and clicking my gun-lock, deliberately presented the piece at him . . .

In this book Melville calls himself Wellingborough Redburn: he might well have anticipated *Moby Dick* and said simply: "Call me Ishmael."

Melville considered *Redburn* a pot-boiler, but it was the pot-boiler of a great romantic poet; only he could have written it. The conclusions he reaches on the reforms necessary for the seaman's welfare are substantially the same as Dana's, but it is less as a study of life at sea that one reads *Redburn* than as a record of a boy's disillusionment, his discovery of human evil and human misery: the nameless woman and her two daughters dying of starvation in the Liverpool cellar with everyone aware of it and nobody except Melville willing to take responsibility, the disease-ridden, exploited immigrants packed like slaves in the hold.

It is not, in other words, for anything like documentary qualities that *Redburn* survives. *Two Years Before the Mast*, however, is primarily a documentary narrative. It would be wrong to say that we are not interested in Dana, but we are interested in him mainly because he subordinates himself to the narration of the voyage of the *Pilgrim*. His book stands at the opposite pole of art to *Redburn*. A character like Melville's figure of evil, the sailor Jackson, who tyrannises the whole forecastle, would have ruined it. Is there a villain in it?

> For several days the captain seemed very much out of humour. Nothing went right or fast enough for him. He quarrelled with the cook, and threatened to flog him for throwing wood on deck.

And he does flog two seamen:

> If you want to know what I flog you for, I'll tell you. It's because I like to do it . . . It suits me. That's what I do it for!

Now Dana was horrified and revolted by the captain's behaviour, but—and this is the important thing—he keeps the incident and his horror in proportion. In the present edition it takes ten pages out of a total of more than three hundred. He tells it soberly, naturally, with restraint. The book is a masterpiece of objectivity, a straightforward report. The effect is one of utter, prosaic truth. Do you want a description of California in the days when it was still a state of Mexico? Are you interested in learning how hides are cured, or how Kanakas live on the beach at San Diego? Dana will tell you. The fascination of *Two Years Before the Mast* is that of Defoe; with this difference: Dana did sail before the mast, did visit California when it was a Mexican state, did cure hides, was all but blood-brother to a Kanaka. "It is," as D. H. Lawrence said, "in the dispassionate statement of plain material facts that Dana achieves his greatness." And in his next sentence he might be expressly discriminating between Dana and Melville: "Dana writes from the remoter, non-emotional centres of being—not from the passional emotional self." It is this objectivity, this sobriety of description, that gives so much weight to his generalisations, such as the following:

> An overstrained sense of manliness is the characteristic of seafaring men, or, rather, of life, on board ship. This often gives an appearance of want of feeling, or even of cruelty.

Melville was incapable of such detachment.

But Dana had another quality beyond the merit of the objective reporter. He was a poet, though a poet of a kind very different from Melville; one is tempted to say a classical poet. Many instances of his poetic quality might be quoted: his description of dawn over the ocean, of the *Pilgrim* becalmed among grampuses, of the albatross, of icebergs, of life on board ship in the tropics, of a tropical thunderstorm. The following is as fine as any of them:

> One night, while we were in the tropics, I went out on to the end of the flying jib-boom, upon some duty, and having finished it, turned round, and lay over the boom for a long time, admiring the beauty of the night before me. Being so far out from the deck, I could look at the ship as at a separate vessel—and there rose up from the water, supported only by the small black hull, a pyramid of canvas, spreading out far beyond the hull, and towering up almost, as it seemed in the indistinct night air, to the clouds. The water was as still as an inland lake; the light trade-wind was gently and steadily breathing from astern; the dark blue sky was studded with the tropical stars; there was no sound but the rippling of the water under the stem, and the sails were spread out wide and high . . . highest of all, the little sky-sail, the apex of the pyramid, seeming actually to touch the stars, and to be out of reach of human hand. So quiet, too, was the sea, and so steady the breeze, that if these sails had been sculptured marble, they could not have been more motionless . . . I was so lost in the sight that I forgot the presence of the man who came out with me, until he said (for he, too, rough old man-of-war's man as he was, had been gazing at the show), half to himself, still looking at the marble sails—"How quietly they do their work!"

That is characteristic of Dana. One sees the state of being that sustained him in those two strenuous years before the mast, in his revulsion against the brutality and poverty of the seaman's life, in the boredom and gruelling labour of curing and stowing hides, in the rigours of the rounding of the Horn: an apprehension at once ardent and tranquil, a calm and constant ecstasy. He was never to attain it again, but it lasted long enough for him to write a book which, despite its subject-matter ("strong and coarse expressions . . . scenes which may be painful to nice feelings . . . the life of a common sailor at sea as it really is"), is a documentary narrative raised to the level of a prose idyll, perfect of its kind.

Walter Allen

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Civilisation is an attribute of men, ants, termites, and bees, but most significantly of man and the ant. The two civilisations have, roughly, the run of the world; they don't to any embarassing extent get in one another's way; man could perhaps extirpate the ant if he chose to, but the need doesn't arise. No wonder, then, that we regard with some misgivings and curiosity this pin-head rival. So near; so far. Between us there exists a chord, the most unearthly chime—like Berlioz's flutes and trumpets—in creation.

That chord has been sharpened in a number of ways by our increased knowledge during the last fifty years. By scientific research: we know a great deal more about the habits and life-patterns of ants than we did, although still we know exceedingly little. By self-understanding: our own life-patterns have come under the lens, with disconcerting results for those who would think of themselves as lions and eagles rather than ants. Yet the more, politically and socially, we evolve—consider events since the Russian Revolution—the more ant-like we seem to become, and the aircraft has given us just that giant's view of ourselves necessary to ram home the illusion. For it is, of course, an illusion. Totalitarianism could only produce the ant-society by analogy. Even if Hitler had conquered the world he couldn't have queen-mothered a race with purely social instincts and functions ruled by caste. It might be possible, artificially, to breed a variety of physical types as ants do—giants, pygmies, etc.—but what social purpose would they serve? Human specialisation exists already in the brain and the machine, and its dangers lie not in the eventual submission to instincts (our totalitarian nightmare), but in an increasing self-awareness liable to end with destruction. At the worst, with some maniac dictator at the head, we might lapse for a time into the condition of degenerate boy-scouts: such a society couldn't be stable, and it would be remote from the busy, selfless ant-state.

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* *The Englishman and the Sea.* Edited by Christopher Lloyd. *Allen and Unwin.* 7s. 6d.

† *Two Years Before the Mast.* By R. H. Dana, Jun. *Hutchinson.* 7s. 6d.

The analogy has been explored and defined in some detail by Dr. Haskins, who is a myrmecologist with a sharp understanding of human history. On many points, of course, his book can't hope to enlighten us: on instinct and intelligence, on the "personality" of the ant-state, on problems of degeneracy and development. To some of these questions, perhaps, science will never find the answer; it can't ever tell us what it's like to be an ant. But Dr. Haskins trims our knowledge energetically and skilfully, and he gives a new emphasis, I think, to certain dominant facts of the ant's world.

It is, to begin with, a hunger-driven world; for most ants, although they thrive on the commonest food stuffs, live in a state of semi-starvation. Hence the importance in their culture (if one can call it that) of the feeding by one ant of another, the pleasures and perversions associated with this act, the individual sacrifices and mass immolations without which the community could not survive. Ants, like ourselves, are ruled by social pressure and—again like ourselves—society is not always capable of distinguishing what is to its own advantage. Dr. Haskins gives many curious examples of failure and deception in ant economy. Some of the most highly civilised ants harbour little thief ants which steal their eggs, and they will sometimes abandon even their own queen-larvae to rear the young of parasitic beetles. Three thousand species of parasitic insects have been counted among the inhabitants of ant colonies: some of them, it is true, kept for useful purposes, such as milking or spinning, but the vast majority living predaceously on their hosts who can ill afford the luxury. Why do they allow it? The answer, says Dr. Haskins, is to be found in those very ties that link the ant community so amazingly together: in the spell exercised by the taste and smell of food. The ant that rejects one intruding insect because it seems disagreeable to its topochemical sense will welcome another insect, equally harmful, but pleasing to the sense. I must give the story, as Dr. Haskins tells it, at some length:

> The beetles of the genera *Lomechusa* and *Atemeles* are large, conspicuous, short-winged creatures, characterised by the presence of long tufts of golden trichomes; which evidently are covered with a film of an attractive substance, since the ants are fascinated with them, and, by extension, with their owners. Lomochusine beetles wander at will about the ant-nests, begging food from time to time from the ants exactly as an ant larva would, and being fed in the same way, after which its trichomes are licked avidly for secretions, just as the larva is for exudates. The beetle is viciously predatory, however, in more ways than one. Although relatively well-fed by the ants at all times, it does not hesitate to devour ant eggs and larvae in quantity to supplement its diet. Its own eggs it leaves scattered irregularly about the nest. Evincing the same mechanical extension of interest in these eggs (which bring them gestatory satisfaction) that has produced such close co-operation among the adults of the higher Formicids, the ants secure the eggs and lavish upon them the greatest attention.

The eggs hatch into grubs, which prey upon the adjacent ant-young, and only an accident of their later upbringing destroys them instead of giving them mastery over the nest. Accident? There's no such thing: this balance of forces has only come into being after a long period of trial and error in which the ant, despite being hoodwinked, wins. If it hadn't won, it wouldn't be there, and the sponging beetle would have to look elsewhere for its keep.

Every page of Dr. Haskins's book is as engrossing as the one from which I have quoted, and irresistibly raises comparisons. Its array of detail will be fresh even to those who consider themselves fairly well-read in the subject. His larger comparisons, and especially his account of ant history, with its cycles of nomadic, agricultural, and state growth, exactly paralleling our own, but co-existing to-day among different species, should be studied and weighed by everyone. The ant can still offer us examples—more in fact than ever—but examples of what? Not of busyness, of a soul-destroying efficiency: those lessons are obsolete. One is left rather with a vision of the strength and helplessness of life. It is probable that long after the disappearance of men from the earth, the more ancient civilisation of ants will continue to unroll dynasties, to build cities, wage wars, explore the tropics and the poles.

G. W. STONIER

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PINDAR: A NEW JUDGMENT

Pindar. By GILBERT NORWOOD. *University of California Press.* $2.50.

Readers of Pindar, from the time of the Alexandrian critics, have found him a puzzler; among English schoolboys he is easily the most unpopular source of "unseens," while even those who keep up their classics after university age are inclined with Voltaire to shun

Des vers que personne n'entend
Et qu'il faut toujours qu'on admire.

A new book on Pindar by a humane scholar is therefore extremely welcome. Professor Norwood's comments, like Pindar's own lines, being φωνάεντα συνετοῖσιν—addressed to the intelligent—this is not a book for hack examinees, but can be recommended to any lover of poetry, provided he has some small knowledge of Greek. Professor Norwood begins with a smack at the Textual Criticism fanatics who would degrade the study of Greek and Latin poetry to "a squalid imitation of the applied sciences." It is refreshing to find a classical professor stating downright that by "the law of diminishing returns" textual criticism has had its day and that it is now time for the student to use his imagination. Using his own, he has reappraised Pindar while debunking certain usual appraisements of him, in particular those which assume "that in the criticism of Pindar ethics must outweigh aesthetics."

The habit of using Greek and Latin classics as tag-books has too often obscured the architectonic virtues of the originals. Where even Horace's odes have not been credited with structure, it is not surprising that people should think they are getting the quintessence of Pindar by running their tongues round detached phrases like the unforgettable ὅταν αἴγλα διόσδοτος ἔλθῃ. But this is not enough—just as it is not enough to assess Spenser as a merely decorative or merely musical poet. Pindar, though doubtless a primitive "thinker," was a highly conscious artist and certainly intended each single ode to be a unity; the question for us is where does this unity lie. Professor Norwood denies emphatically that it lies in any sort of "philosophy" or propagandist purpose. His chapter on Pindar's "views" demolishes those many scholars who try to discover in Pindar an ethical system or underlying didacticism and proves, I think conclusively, that the Myth which normally occupies the centre—and the greater part—of each ode is not chosen primarily to point any moral.

His analysis of Pindar's muddle-headedness, especially about the relations of *areta* and success, is a tonic antidote to the common assumption of hellenists that all ancient Greeks were distinguished by clarity of thought. Nor does he mince his words about Pindar's narrow-mindedness, pointing out that, though "patriotic" in a narrow sense, Pindar could not appreciate the then developing patriotism of Athenian democracy because, a Dorian of the Dorians, "his affection for oligarchy enabled him to identify his country (as we should call it) with his own class." Similarly in religion Pindar was pious but a naïf, for whom "gods, as individuals, never right any wrongs that are not directed against themselves: they stand for nothing at all except their own comfort, rank, and privileges, exactly like the Dorian nobles eulogised by Pindar, who were not leaders in any spiritual or moral sense." But, while thus debunking the conception of Pindar as Sage, he readjusts the balance by rebutting the charge that Pindar, as author of so much commissioned work, had thereby sold out his independence as an artist.

Far more novel than this preliminary placing and displacing of Pindar against his historical background are those chapters (the bulk of the book) which look for his poetic coherence. Professor Norwood concentrates here on the use of mythology and the use of symbols. While mythological allusions are at least half wasted on those unacquainted with their matrix, this long-established device persists among us to-day; Mr. Eliot's literary allusions are essentially of the same kind. The important thing is that in Pindar, as in Eliot, the allusions are integral to the poem. While the reference to Eliot is mine, Professor Norwood brings out another point in common between these poets—the observation of καιρός i.e., of the significant highlight, the vivid and pregnant detail, the excerpt from a chain of events which, divorced from its *termini a quo* and *ad quem*, achieves a specious present. He shows how Pindar was innovating here and knew it, herein, though not in his opinions, being far more sophisticated than Homer.

It is however Pindar's symbolism which chiefly occupies Professor Norwood and here he is most illuminating. While disliking the pedantry of the old-fashioned classics don, he does look at the words—but looks at them as living things. Having perceived that Pindar's choice of phrase is often conditioned by the dominant motif of the ode, he searches each ode for a key symbol. Such are the Lyre in the 1st Pythian, the Triple Diadem in the 7th Nemean, and the Pebble in the 10th Olympian (the last a particularly neat example which involves among other pieces of Pindaric sleight-of-hand a play on the word ψᾶφος). This quest for a symbol and its reflections is most fascinating in those odes or passages of odes which have been traditionally dismissed as difficult or irrelevant; thus by some brilliant detective work on the 11th Pythian he discovers a key symbol in the Bee (the Bee being also a name for a prophetess and the ode featuring Cassandra). In the 7th Olympian again, through remembering that Rhodes was the Rose Island, he finds that the image of a growing rose pervades the whole poem. The same method, on a lesser scale, enables him to vindicate allegedly meaningless epithets. Whether all his findings can be accepted or not, Professor Norwood has certainly done much to acquit Pindar of incoherence—and so to send at least one reader back to him with more hope of finding his way through those notorious but glamorous labyrinths.

LOUIS MACNEICE

THE OGLANDERS OF NUNWELL

Nunwell Symphony. By C. ASPINALL-OGLANDER. *Hogarth.* 15s.

This is the family history of the Oglanders, who have been in continuous occupation of the estate of Nunwell in the Isle of Wight since the Norman Conquest. According to tradition the first of these English Oglanders was Richard d'Orglandes, a younger son of the Norman Seigneur d'Orglandes, who landed with Duke William in 1066 and was rewarded with Nunwell for his services. Since then twenty-six generations of Oglanders have succeeded to the estate, and from the accumulation of documents they left behind them Brigadier Aspinall-Oglander (himself, alas, only an Oglander by adoption) has been able to unroll through nine centuries the life of these quiet English country gentlemen.

Before commenting on these unique family records, I would draw attention to this matter of pedigree. Not everyone can name any of their ancestors back for 26 generations. But we all have ancestors; and a little simple arithmetic will show that 26 generations ago everyone had 65 million ancestors. One must allow for overlapping and duplication in every family tree; but even so, with the population of England about two or three million in the time of William I, it seems likely that everyone of English descent alive to-day can claim as an ancestor every man and woman alive in England in 1066, who has descendants alive to-day. Therefore any reader of this review can claim Richard d'Orglandes as his ancestor, not by tradition but by statistics. If anyone objects, I would point out that 26 generations in 900 years are a meagre allowance and you are entitled by the law of averages to 32,000,000 ancestors in 1066 if you can identify them.

The Oglander squires were stay-at-homes. Until the introduction of a ferry service in 1805, the Islanders of Wight formed an isolated community of a few thousand souls, and only felt the impact of the outside world when there was a threat of foreign invasion. Not that the Wight was ever actually invaded after 1340, but it is the most vulnerable point on the South Coast of England; and the records of Nunwell abound in references to drilling of the militia from 1295 onwards. But invasion scares only cropped up every fifty years or so. The Islanders lived by agriculture; and the height of an Oglander's ambition was to administer his estates, act as a Justice of the Peace, marry a girl of good family (preferably with a dowry), and beget a male Oglander. The only occasion when history impinged on Nunwell was when Charles I escaped from Hampton Court to the Island in 1647. Sir John Oglander was a royalist but a cautious one, since he had already incurred a heavy fine from Parliament for his loyalty. When the King went to stay at Nunwell he "graciously accepted a purse of gold proffered on bended knee"; and "I had some speech with him which I shall forbear to discover" records Sir John in his diary. The secret of that conversation will never be known. Probably the King hoped that Sir John could help him to get to France and was disappointed. At any rate it was his last chance of escape. A day of two later the Governor of the Island confined him at Carisbrooke.

This Sir John Oglander (1585–1655) was an interesting character. His portrait shows a conventional Jacobean gentleman in a ruff, with moustache and small Vandyk beard, a long nose, a cautious mouth, a wary eye and a self-confident expression. We know more about him than any other Oglander because he kept a copious diary throughout his life and docketed all his correspondence before locking it up for posterity. He drew up a code of rules for the conduct of his son, which do not belie the cautious mouth of the portrait. Seventeen severely practical injunctions how to get on in the world and keep down expenditure, followed by some final advice to pay attention to God and give charity to the poor for the benefit of the world to come. Yet he was a good friend, a devoted husband and a fond father; and behind his worldliness can be seen some odd signs of endearing eccentricity. When profoundly agitated, as by the death of his wife or his own extravagance, he would prick his finger and record his feelings in his diary in his own blood. The death of his eldest son is written in his own tears: "Only with my tears and a foul pen was this written."

Sir John's descendants followed his advice and prospered. His son was made a baronet by Charles II as a reward for the family's losses in the Civil War; and the baronetcy only became extinct with the last Oglander in *tail male* in 1874. The last Victorian baronet preferred yachting to breeding at Nunwell; and eventually his wife broke her leg on a cruise and had to have it amputated. So ended the dynasty, as if to justify old Sir John's doctrine that it could only prosper at Nunwell.

RALPH PARTRIDGE

BEHIND THE SCENES

The Clash. By ARTURO BAREA. *Faber.* 12s. 6d.

With *The Clash* Mr. Arturo Barea rounds off his trilogy describing the road by which he came to England as a refugee. The pattern followed is that invented by Restif De La Bretonne when he wrote *Monsieur Nicolas* or *The Human Heart Unveiled*, a work which begins with an address from writer to reader:

"Lover of truth, fear not to read me! You will not be beguiled by tinsel trappings, nor deceived on matters of fact. I have written novels enough which, though founded on reality, did not exclude imagination: I thirst for the simple truth; I give it you; for truth alone can serve the purpose of this book."

Restif's book still lives because it is a complete revelation of a private mind, an exposure of what a man usually keeps secret from the world. But the story is not the simple truth: it is rather a complicated web in which fantasy is inextricably interwoven with truth. We know for certain that many things that are most vivid in *Monsieur Nicolas* are in the domain of psychological reality—events imagined by Restif which had greater force in framing his attitudes than things which actually happened. All this is by way of edging up to the point of saying that Mr. Barea in following the same path as Restif has placed his critics in an acutely difficult position—at least a highly embarrassing one. A critic faced by a novel must bring his critical standards to bear on it without ulterior considerations. He cannot remember that the writer is a charming fellow with nice friends, or a member of a political group with laudable intentions, or that he has had a hard time; he can only remember the standards by which he judges Proust, Balzac, Flaubert, Dostoievsky, Henry James or Turgenev. By those standards *The Forge*, the first part of Mr. Barea's trilogy was a confusion, redeemed only by its deep feeling for the life of Madrid which was known and understood; the second part—*The Track*—was a success as a work of art. In it Mr. Barea made a personal experience carry the whole story of the Spanish Moroccan tragedy, he understood what had happened to himself in Morocco, and what had happened to Spain there, and out of the two sorts of knowledge had made a balanced whole. The third part—*The Clash*, which is now before us—is a confusion again. In it there is Mr. Barea's personal story, there is the story of the defence of Madrid, there is the story of the division and corruption among

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y Canon Adam Fox, formerly Professor of etry at Oxford. From the introduction: The works of Plato have generally been in the nds of philosophers and scholars when they ght to have been in the hands of the people." hese words largely indicate the purpose of lato for *Pleasure*, and the title does the rest.

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the Republicans, and there is as a pendant the story of what was happening to France in 1939. Here the critic's embarrassment rises up to choke him ; there is a great deal to be said about the thing as a work of art, or rather about why it is not a work of art—but as one shapes the words there is Mr. Barea repeating Restif's address to the reader. If the thing were the novel, which it is in form, it would be possible to say that the study of a ruthless egotist overwhelmed by war was excellent. The picture of his disregard for any personal feelings his wife Aurelia might have could not be improved as a study in egotism, nor could the picture of his relations with the typist Maria :

> There was Maria. Our affair had lasted for six years, which was not bad. But I had hoped to shape her to my measure, as I had with Aurelia, a very long time ago. And Maria had developed in her own way. I had failed . . .
>
> When I first came to the office, Maria was the least attractive of the four typists. She was seventeen then, with black eyes and hair, angular and bony. Her olive skin looked dirty, her neck was long and thin, her chest flat. With that she was highly strung and active, rapid of comprehension. She was not particularly well educated, but quick on the uptake and a good typist. I took her on as my secretary and we worked well together.
>
> Maria's face was pitted with pock marks. This made her very unhappy and she was continually conscious of it. It gave her comfort when I began to tell her about the difficulties of my married life and my hopes of finding The Woman, because I tried to explain that I did not think so much of physical beauty as of mutual understanding, of harmony, of fusion. I was unaware at the time that I was seducing the young girl.

The creation of these private hells of personal relationship is masterly, so is the handling of the mechanism of release—an appointment as Republican Press Censor after the outbreak of civil war.

> I felt elated and light-headed. During the day I had been sorting out the new situation with Aurelia and with Maria. I had explained to myself and to the two women, one after the other, that I would have to work during the night and to sleep during the day. I would no longer be able to meet Maria in the afternoons, as she had demanded. I would no longer have to struggle with the other's clinging and cloying nearness at home . . .

But at this point precision departs, and we are lost, as indeed Mr. Barea was, in a maze of back stairs intrigue among the various component factions of the Republic. So disturbing and complex was the maze that Mr. Barea's nerves failed to stand the strain. The story of his breakdown is moving, but it is reminiscence and not art, and the pain and distress of it colour the account of the progress of the war. Aurelia and Maria simply drop from sight, the situation is not worked out. All that one can say of what follows is that Mr. Barea makes the reader share the bewilderment and unhappiness of an individual lost in great events.

ANTHONY WEST

EASTERN ALBUM

Chinese Album. Indian Album. By CECIL BEATON. *Batsford.* 12*s.* 6*d. each.*

Mr. Beaton's latest collections of *images* cannot but increase a reputation which has been very exactly deserved. If it is permissible (and I think it is) to speak of a " great " photographer, then Mr. Beaton is unquestionably that ; not only does his eye discriminate and compose like that of a painter, but his sensitive and clever mind never fails to reject the vulgarisms and sentimentalities with which Nature herself loves to tease us. If, as seldom happens, he elects to photograph a wide stretch of country, it is because he has seen in it those elements of beauty by which some great painter has been attracted : the " Landscape of Fukien," for example, reminds us instantly of Claude ; yet there is nothing arty or faked in the method of capture.

These albums are an arresting witness to the unity of the visible world ; by a paradox things and even people derive their singularity, their essential drama, from their similarity to other things. These pictures, besides being faithful reports, are also images in the literary sense. The curtain of noodles in the making (Sze-chwan) looks like a rainstorm in the near distance ; the mask-like faces of Chinese officials are contrasted with the face-like masks of Chinese actors ; the sleeping boy on the steps of the mosque at Hyderabad feigns an attitude of sudden death ; the Chinese rag merchant might be a beggar, the beggar a rag merchant.

Wherever the emphasis is on an individual physiognomy the photographer has clearly been at pains to discover the qualities of bone and surface structure which differentiate Indian and Chinese faces from those of Western man ; but in all cases people are shown in the settings of their lives. There are no studio portraits here ; gone are the artificial pose and the frozen grin : one cannot imagine Mr. Beaton bidding any of his sitters to " say *brush.*" Thus it is strictly true of these albums that every picture in them tells a story, and the longer you look at them the richer the story becomes. In the photographs of India individual people and buildings predominate over natural scenes ; in the Chinese album the strangeness is more marked and the figures are accidents in a world of arabesque. Details are always significant, but they are *found*, not arranged, except perhaps by a shift of the camera. Look (in the Chinese album) at the " Sword-play Demonstration," where the vitality of the composition and the drama of movement are immensely heightened by the low-pitched ceiling of the room. Or, again, at the sick ward series, in which Mr. Beaton achieves extraordinary effects of pathos from the most absolute realism of presentation. But here, as elsewhere, the harmonies of light are everything.

LIONEL CRANFIELD

FROM MOSES TO LENIN

The Socialist Tradition. By ALEXANDER GRAY. *Longmans.* 21*s.*

It is probably impossible to write an adequate history of Socialist philosophy or organisation. In England, at least, the difficulty of the task has deterred all but a few from attempting it. There is, certainly, a great deal of available material on the outstanding figures. But, as Professor Gray rightly points out, anyone who tries to present the whole sweep of Socialist thought is immediately faced with two serious problems. First, he must decide which of a multitude of lesser lights are of sufficient historical or contemporary importance to justify their inclusion. And, secondly, he must establish the criteria by which he judges whether or not there are Socialist elements in a man's philosophy. As he will realise, from his weary familiarity with the bitter polemics of several generations, the majority of his readers are almost certain to dispute the credentials of some of those he admits and criticise the exclusion of others. As best he can, he must strike a balance.

Perhaps with justice Mr. Gray has written some sixty pages on Socialist ideas in the ancient and mediæval worlds, not so much for their own significance as for their inspiration of others in later centuries. Mably, for instance, leant heavily upon Plato and Lycurgus, while certain aspects of the Gospels played a considerable part in shaping the pattern of Socialist thought in Victorian Britain. This section of his book is both useful and entertaining, and says as much as most people want to know about the egalitarian or communal elements in the thought of antiquity.

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The remainder of Mr. Gray's long and scholarly study—in which there is ample evidence of his acquaintance with many of the original texts he discusses—is somewhat uneven. This is partly due to his avowed distaste for some of the men he was unable to exclude altogether, especially Rousseau, Marx and Lassalle. But where he admits his bias, Professor Gray is still stimulating, and his critical objections—though seasoned with heavy sarcasm—are not lightly to be dismissed. It is also irritating to find many quotations scattered through the text without translation. For those who have been educated at Dundee High School and Göttingen University this may present no problem, but this book deserves to be read by a wider circle than students who can take Latin, German and French in their stride.

Of the book as a whole, it is not possible in this space to say more than that it certainly takes a place in the book list of any undergraduate reading political theory, even if, as I do, he differs strongly from some of Mr. Gray's views of Socialism and his emphasis upon certain of its protagonists. But whether the material is valuable for the seminar or for private reflection, it is seriously and provocatively presented.

If I am to dispute any part of the balance struck by Mr. Gray I must confess that his analysis of Babeuf and his *Conspiration des Egaux* is inadequate and not a little misleading. Apart from his caustic prejudice against Babeuf himself, Mr. Gray claims that Babeuf is significant because he

> represents the nodal point at which the academic egalitarianism of Mably becomes transformed into the ungovernable destructiveness of left-wing anarchism.

But the novelty and importance of the *Conspiration* is chiefly to be found in its remarkable revolutionary organisation, based upon the disciplined vanguard which is the starting point of the road that led to the Petrograd October. Mr. Gray's failure to bring this out sufficiently is the reason, I suspect, for his omission of Blanqui and Bronterre O'Brien from his volume. For both these men, as for Weitling—who provides the link with the Communist League and with Marx—Babouvisme was a major influence upon their thought. And, indirectly, it played a large part in forming the opinions of Julian Harney, who has been done insufficient justice by historians of Socialism. Another striking omission is the absence of any reference to Winstanley and the Left in the English Civil War. Surely the Diggers have as much claim to mention as Moses?

Mr. Gray's conclusions are remarkably topical. The central question which confronts Socialism to-day, he says, is

> The choice between the pessimistic view of the State inherent in the Marxian tradition, and the more hopeful and optimistic attitude represented conveniently by Bernstein and the Revisionists, and by the Fabians . . . wherever the Marxist tradition has prevailed, something has gone out of Socialism, leaving it poorer . . . Marx . . . built Socialism on class warfare, and set hatred, and not love, at the centre of all things. In his hands, Socialism lost its vision, and it lost its breadth; for however useful hatred may be as the inspiration of a short term policy, the doctrine of eternal rancour, of class warfare and undying bitterness provides too narrow a basis for a philosophy of life.

This, according to Mr. Gray, is the reason why Marxism is uncongenial to the English who, for some reason differing from the Scots in this matter, do not cherish malice. This, coming after the analysis of the Marxist tradition, no doubt justifies Mr. Gray's intention of showing that Marx was not the sort of person one would wish to meet more than twice. But Mr. Gray's views about the present and future of Socialism are virtually irrelevant to the greater part of his analysis, which is informative or provoking in direct proportion to one's own prejudices.

NORMAN MACKENZIE

Antoine. By ANTOINE. *W. H. Allen.* 10s. 6d.

M. Antoine's story starts when, aged eight, he decorated his young sister with curls, keeping them in place with honey. On these two themes, adornment and the means of achieving it, his success has been built. From an obscure Polish village one apprenticeship led to another and so to Paris. There he worked in a cellar plaiting hair until Carnaval brought flocks of girls from the Galleries Lafayette impatient to have their heads dressed for a ball; this gave the young man his first opportunity to show what he could do, and from that moment his notoriety was assured. He worked at holiday resorts and in London, married wisely, then opened his own salon in Paris where he beautified an endless stream of women, great actresses and reigning queens among them.

M. Antoine's friends in Paris included Bernhardt, Maurice Rostand, Modigliani and Cocteau. It is a pity that he is not a better writer, for he has lived in, and helped to create, a world where the fantastic must be surpassed by the more fantastic. He gives a lively account of a fancy dress ball in Venice to which one lady came in a dress copied from a painting and insisted on bringing rhinoceroses from the zoo to complete the picture. Working in his house of glass, or in other settings of the most expensive simplicity he experiments and invents; coloured wigs, crystal curls, dogs dyed to match their owner's hair and other curiosities flow from his imagination. Beneath the fantasies, luxuries and vulgarities Mme Antoine's sound business sense guides and directs, salons multiply, and America is caught in the exquisite cellophane toils that spread over Europe.

This is a book that can be taken as a study in the materialism of the social history of this century, or read as a fairy tale; either way it is an astonishing and highly coloured document.

Week-end Competitions

No. 851

Set by G. W. Stonier

The usual prizes are offered for a sonnet addressed to one's favourite British murderer. Entries by May 28th.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 848

Set by F. C. C.

> I have been given an enchanting little coloured china figure of Wesley, about eight inches high. With one hand he clasps a Bible to his stomach, the other hand is raised in exhortation. Only it is not actually a hand, but a smooth blackened stump, such as could hardly have been produced by an accidental breakage. Was it deliberately thrust into the flames? If so, why? and by whom? Readers are invited to answer these questions in not more than twelve lines of verse, or 120 words of prose.

Report by F. C. C.

Many of the ingenious suggestions I have received have had to be dismissed because they were far from ingenious in versification. I recommend a First Prize of a guinea each to L.E.J. and J. R. Till. Fifteen shillings each to M. Trench, Little Billee and G. J. Blundell, with Consolation Prizes of eight shillings each, to William Bliss, Willy Tadpole, R. J. P. Hewison and E. W. Fordham. Willy Tadpole's excellent verses do not explain how the hand of the little figure itself came to be burnt. Many other competitors failed to do this. Cranmer was frequently mentioned, a good many thought the deed was done by a child.

This has been my own conjecture about what I shall henceforward delightedly call my Stump Wesley. I imagined a very small, daring and unrepentant Wesleyan, who had fidgeted during the sermon, and

Company Meeting

VICKERS LIMITED

PEACETIME ACTIVITIES

THE 79th annual general meeting of
ickers, Limited, was held on May 15, in
ondon.
Mr. A. A. Jamieson, the chairman, in the
urse of his speech, said: I have little
ubt that stockholders will wish to know
at has been done towards replacing with
mmercial work some of the armament work
hich employed us so fully at the end of
e war and for so many years before.
ckers-Armstrongs up to March 31, 1946,
ve booked orders for merchant ships of
proximate value of £18,000,000, for air-
aft of a commercial type £6,000,000, and
r engineering products £5,500,000. In ad-
tion a contract has been taken for
I.R.O.H. prefabricated houses of the
lue of £20,000,000. However, engineering
pacity is still available and no efforts are
ing spared to find suitable employment for

Cash in the consolidated balance sheet
tals £12,593,000. Schemes for improve-
ents and modernisation total £7,000,000.
e look forward to playing a notable part
assisting the policy of full employment
th a consequent benefit to the national
onomy. Our total liquid resources are
equate for our purposes but no more,
d they will be put to fruitful use as
portunity offers.
As stockholders know, theirs is an active
siness, performing a useful function in
ny directions, and determined that its
thods and equipment shall be efficient.
e company is also well buttressed from
e financial angle, and I see no reason why
ckholders may not look forward to re-
ving a reasonable return.
The report was adopted.

Company Meeting

AUTOMATIC TELEPHONE AND ELECTRIC

RECOVERY PROBLEMS

THE annual general meeting of the Automatic Telephone and Electric Company, Ltd., will be held on May 21 at Liverpool.

The following is an extract from the statement of the Chairman, Sir Alexander Roger, K.C.I.E., circulated with the report:—

Profit on trading is £630,815, compared with £482,646. Your directors recommend a final dividend of 7 per cent. on the Ordinary stock, making 10 per cent. for the year, plus a cash bonus of 2½ per cent., and a dividend of 10 per cent. on the Deferred Stock and Shares, plus a cash bonus of 2½ per cent., all subject to tax. We were engaged almost exclusively on war production for the fighting Services and the armaments industry. We are now well advanced towards reconversion, but this is no light undertaking in an intricate engineering organisation. Many months must pass before our plans take full shape and our pre-war skill and process speed are restored.

I have just returned from a long tour of Empire and foreign countries, supported by technical experts of the highest standing, and my experience is that we are already behind in the struggle for world trade. Difficulties of finding passages and of transporting goods are placing a very serious penalty on the British effort made by exporters.

I have found everywhere a desire to buy British goods and a wholesome respect for British methods and integrity. Outside Britain we industrialists are not regarded as being so inept, unenterprising and incompetent as some of our politicians are doing their utmost to make the world believe.

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